

IN PURSUIT OF SMILES

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PREFACE

Humour constitutes an important element in life. Regardless of how sober the subject, there is always a lighter side to it. At village level, humour is coupled with folk wisdom. On duty, humour comes in handy to relieve work pressures. In the classroom humour helps in communicating with the members.

When the message is conveyed lightly, it tends to stay. Also the lighter vein is a catalyst in promoting team work and social tolerance. There is no better sight in life than to see two friends testing each other for mutual tolerance. Last but not least, humour can be used to improve communication skills. It may be important to highlight here that most recipients of gallantry awards have been acknowledged in their citations for remaining cheerful in the face of odds.

Humour is dynamic and evolutionary. The electronic media provides access to humour and is a great help in reducing fatigue. A witty message from a friend sends you convulsing with laughter. This helps in unwinding by providing with a break in the continued work cycle. The intensive and extensive work takes its toll and prevents you from taking a breather. You feel refreshed when a lighter subject interjects the monotonous routine.

This book has been compiled to show the travel of humour over the past half-century. It is meant for both genders of all age groups. We would like to hear from you **to insure** that the second edition of this book is better than this one.

The contents of this book may include humour as the text or the normal communication put across the lighter way. At places some simple lessons learnt through experience are included. Also, some traditions and practices of the past generation might have been included. This is an effort to reduce the gap between our age group and the future generation.

We wish you the best of smiles.

PROLOGUE

A man came to a clinic and climbing on the doctor started uttering, "One, two, three, four and five." With help from his staff, the doctor wrestled himself free and angrily

asked the visitor, “What the hell are you up to?” The latter naively repeated what a friend had told him, “You can count on this doctor”.

This way we can enjoy the humour and also learn the meaning of some proverbial expressions. This book has a twofold aim; to see a **smile** on your face and, to provide you with at least one practice in developing your **communication skills**.

It goes without saying that in the absence of a common language, it would have been difficult for people of the world to be mutually intelligible. Therefore, a common language has always been a necessity for the mankind. Almost 35 % of the humanity today has willingly adopted English as the **lingua franca**, also called the **Language of the Wider Communication (LWC)**. Another 35% use Spanish as LWC and they too are more than willing to use English where required.

Under the system in vogue the language is taught to the required level. Subsequently, tests are conducted to declare the learners as qualified. Up to this stage, communication in English becomes possible. However the expression in overall perspective remains slow, elementary, inaccurate, and obstructed. It is the continued practice of the language which makes your expression smooth and fluent. The non-native speakers are relatively more prone to inaccuracy as well as lack of fluency than the native Englishmen.

There is another dimension to consider here. The rapid expansion of technology has brought in new terminology. The precise connotation behind each phrase is, sometimes, misunderstood and the communication void thus generated leads to major practical difficulties.

The Aviation industry was amongst the first to take cognizance of this problem. Consequently, all crew members now undergo recurrent language courses regardless of their age and the nationality. The Gulf Countries invest heavily in English and hire the best native English instructors to enhance accuracy and fluency in their countries. Also, the Gulf countries generate more opportunities for practice of English by making the English communication compulsory for all employees. Pakistan is sitting complacent on the subject and our standards are declining fast.

As already mentioned, this book is meant to provide with at least one practice to the readers in verbal as well as written communication.

To extract maximum benefit from this book, the following is suggested:

- *If the contents of this book do not bring a smile on your face, consider yourself **beyond economical repair**.*
- *If it takes you more than 4 hours to read through the entire text, rush to the nearest school.*

- *Read the contents the first time only to enjoy the **humour** if there is any.*
- *Practise **narrating** them in your own language. The narration must become more accurate and fluent with each practice. This is to achieve an improvement in the **verbal** expression.*
- *Prepare your own book of smiles to practise **written** communication. To start with, just preserve the concept on a piece of paper regardless of the language quality. Subsequently, edit the script repeatedly for accuracy and conciseness. Normally editing is a boring exercise but editing humour is fun. Do take help from family and friends where required.*
- *Please feel free to suggest improvements in this book. We consider ourselves humble students willing to learn and improve.*

COMMON

CONTENTS

PAF

Pakistani

Folklore

Media

Indian

Miscellaneous

PAF

Letting a Brake Loose

The aircraft has two foot-operated brakes unlike the single car brake. The left and the right brakes must be applied with equal foot pressure to preclude veering of the aircraft towards the harder applied brake.

During checks before take-off, the student pilot of a Harvard aircraft applied more pressure on left brake than he did on the right one. His engine was at full power at the time. Consequently, the aircraft started rotating vigorously towards the left. Also, in panic, the pilot pressed the radio button. This action blocked all the incoming calls.

Feeling helpless, the pilot was heard muttering,

“Oye Mundia, teri bebe nahin si kehndi, pilot na ban?”

(Didn't your mother tell you not to become a pilot?)

He continued

“Oye putra, teray kolon te kadi cycle naeen challi, toon jehaz kithon chalaona ain?”

(How could you fly an airplane when you are unable even to ride a bicycle properly?).

He added, *“Putra aj naan bachia.”*

(Son, you won't survive today.)

The aircraft kept rotating with the radius getting bigger every time. Meanwhile the mobile traffic control and the flying instructors in air at the time persisted with their pieces of advice for him but to no avail.

Luckily, he released the radio button just at the last moment. Following the advice of an instructor he managed to control the aircraft, barely surviving an accident. Everyone had a sigh of relief.

As for the pilot, this proved the last training flight for him.

Better of the Two Caps

A Pilot Officer was the flight commander in a parade being inspected by the visiting Commander - in - Chief (C-in-C), Air Marshal A Rahim Khan.

The chief stopped next to him and asked,

“Mr. Pilot Officer, don't you have another peak cap?”

“Sir I do.” Replied the young officer politely.

“Then why don't you put that on?” the chief followed up.

“Because this one is better than that, Sir” replied the officer in a cool manner.

The C-in-C smiled and moved ahead in grace.

Mess going to Dogs

An officer was known for his wit. While he stayed in the mess before marriage, a married officer happened to visit him.

The visitor was duly entertained by the host. Not happy with the upkeep of environments, he commented, “this mess has gone to dogs”.

The host replied, “On the contrary, dogs have come to the mess.”

The visitor showed his dislike to this remark. The host spent the next half hour explaining that his remark had been a general statement not directed at the guest.

MI Khan

A PAF officer used to introduce himself as MI Khan. A friend commented, Rather than telling your identity, you seem to ask him for its confirmation.

Mach and Pak Number

The aircraft was asked by the Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower,

“Request your Mach Number.” The voice being muffled, the pilot responded, “My Pak Number is 1015”. *Mach number is the figure representing the aircraft speed in relation to the local speed of sound. Pak Number, on the other hand, is the pay roll number of an employee.*

The Flying Time Inquiry

Someone rang up an airline office and inquired, “Excuse me, what is the flying time from Karachi to London?”

“Just a minute”, responded the inquiry desk.

“Thanks a lot”, said the caller and hung up.

The Landing Time Inquiry

The pilot, after a bumpy landing, called the tower,

“Request my landing time?”

“For which landing, please?” inquired the Air Traffic Control.

A Helicopter Ride for a Fighter Pilot

A helicopter pilot invited a ‘fighter’ pilot for a ride in his rotorcraft. After landing, the helicopter pilot wanted to know as to how the flight had gone for his friend.

The fighter friend replied,

“Flight tey changi si per hae wehlay banday da kum”.

(The flight was good but it is suitable only for those who have nothing better to do.)

Racism in the PAF

A darkish PAF pilot wears moustache which has turned grey due to age.

A friend remarked,

“You look like an Oxford shoe with jogging shoe laces.”

The Crew Room Interpretation of Some Names

The crew room of a squadron is a place where humour comes in handy to unwind after strenuous work. In one of the squadrons at a certain time, the officers found it a favourite pastime to interpret famous names in terms of their possible origin in Pakistan. Here are some examples:

William Shakespeare

Wali Muhammad Sheikh Pir

Sophia Lauren

Sufia Loren (from Lahore)

Chou En Lai

Chaudhry Noor Elahi

Raquel Welch

Ruqayyah Warraich

Cyrus Vance

Saeen Awan

Glucose Versus Glaxo's-D

A PAF pilot was on a hospital visit to inquire after a sick friend. When he noticed the glucose supply attached to the patient, he said,

“So they have put you on Glaxo's-D”.

The Sister Services

A Pilot Officer was told by a Flight Lieutenant that the army, the navy and the air force were *sister services*.

A few days later, the pilot officer met an army captain and asked,

“Hello sister, how are you?”

Hard Work and Discipline

A pilot was not promoted to the rank of a Squadron Leader because he had earned himself adverse evaluation reports. Meanwhile, the Royal Saudi Air Force requested the PAF to depute a Flight Lieutenant in the safety department. Being the senior most in the rank, the superseded pilot proceeded to Saudi Arabia.

He was on a visit to Pakistan when his promoted friends protested, “With clean records, we are here to stay poor. With poor performance you are making fat money.” The visitor replied, “Remember my two pieces of advice. Firstly, you must always work hard and secondly, your discipline must always remain good.”

He consoled his friends, “Do not worry. I have not yet doled out charity money for the current year”.

PAKISTANI

Pakistani Ordering a Meal in England

A Pakistani entered a British restaurant. When the waiter arrived for taking the order, the following conversation took place:

Customer: Menu, please.

Waiter: Here is the menu, sir.

Customer: (After a short while), please bring the sandwich, salad and the cold drink.

The waiter brought the order. But the customer was not satisfied with the plate size.

So he said, "Bring all this in an elder plate".

The waiter brought the order in the desired plate.

The customer, pointing to a table said, "Sit".

The waiter sat on the table in obedience to this instruction.

"No, you stand, plate sit", said the customer.

Once finished, the customer commanded, "Bring mathematics".

The waiter brought in the bill.

On seeing the bill, the customer demanded, "Put history on it."

The waiter put the date on the bill at the required place.

When the customer was departing, the waiter asked,

"Mister, by the way, what all languages can you speak?"

The customer replied,

"I can speak Punjabi. I can speak Pahari etc"

"Oye, toon Murree na ain?"

(Are you from Murree?!!)" he was asked.

The Pakistani Transliteration

Name of the Book: *Lambs Tales by Shakespeare*

Transliteration: Memney ki dum se hilti nashpati

The Parrot must Speak Urdu

A film maker once approached a poet. The story included a poem about a parrot contemplated to play some role in the movie.

The poet wrote the requisite poem which started as,

"Aseen bethay dekhdey reh gaye, te tota choori kha gya"

(We were left staring when the parrot ate away the 'choori').

The film maker interrupted,

“Excuse me, but I had an Urdu film in mind”.

“No problem”, said the poet. We will replace ‘choori’ with ‘pan.’

The Ice Breaking on Wedlock

A man from Karachi approached his bride the first time saying,

“Aap ki mujh se shadi ho chuki hay. Main usi silsilay mein hazir hua tha”

(You have been given in marriage to me. I am here in the same connection).

Kausar Niazi on Bhutto

Kausar Niazi, in a public address said,

“Bhutto suraj hai, hum uski kirnain hain, Bhutto chand hai, hum uski roshani hain, Bhutto samundar hai, hum uski lehrein hain.”

(Bhutto is a sun, we are his rays; Bhutto is a moon and we are his light, Bhutto is an ocean and we are his waves).

A voice was heard,

‘ Bhutto deg hai aur hum uskay chamchay hain’.

(Bhutto is a cauldron and we are the spoons.)

The Traditional Dish Prices

Pakistanis holding the Canadian nationality find no jobs in Canada commensurate with their qualification and experience. Left with no choice, the men take up employment in the Middle East, leaving the wives in Canada.

Living in Canada being expensive, the ladies attempt to supplement the family income by resorting to different means of earning. One such source is to sell ‘*Aaloo Wala Paratha*’ (potato filled fried bread) to the local Canadians.

The ladies have this product laid outside their residences. Not being well-versed with English, some of them seek attention of the potential customers in the expressions like “Pakistani pizza! **Half past two dollars...**”

Life Partner with the Right Name

A lady named Rehmat Bibi received marriage proposal from a prospective groom named Gul Khan. She refused the proposal on the pretext, "People will call me 'Rehmat Khan' after marriage and that sounds masculine in gender."

FOLKLORE

Kachi Abadi

A man looking for an address asked a local resident,

"Bhai, aye kachi abadi aye?"

(Is this sector named kachi abadi?).

The resident replied,

"Aye toon takkar maar k dekh ley."

(This you can check by banging your head against it).

The Sharp Horse

A horse cart had all six seats occupied but was still running fast. A passenger remarked, "This horse is very sharp".

Another one commented, "Has a file been used on this horse?"

A Policeman Plucked in Raw State

The police station received a 'theft-in-progress' report. An officer rushed to the given address accompanied by a policeman appearing young for the job.

A voice was heard,

"Thanedar Sahib, jaldi wich ay sepae kacha ee tor liyay o?"

(Officer, did you pluck this policeman in raw shape in a hurry?)

Gamay Da Hotel

A man visited a roadside restaurant named *Gamay da Hotel*. After having devoured his meal, the customer proceeded to the wash basin fixed in a corner of the dining area. Oblivious of the environments, he started to produce loud gargling sounds while rinsing the mouth and felt free even to wash his nostrils.

Unable to cope with the disgust, the irate customers complained to the manager who walked up to the offender and said, "Sir, please understand that other customers are dining here." The customer however was bent upon defending his action.

The polite exchange continued for some time, but to no avail. Finally, the desperate manager asked, "Would you dare doing all this at a five star restaurant?"

The customer replied, "As a matter of fact, I did."

The manager guessed, "There must have been complaints."

The customer admitted that he had been chased out of the restaurant with the staff members shouting after him,

"Idiot, you think this is Gamay da Hotel!"

A Fateful Day for a Bald Man

Two college friends namely Bashir and Nazir were watching a movie in a cinema. The movie had not done well at the box office and most seats were empty. The mates preferred to occupy rear seats.

Both friends noticed that a man occupying a seat a few rows ahead was totally devoid of any hair. Both were tempted to try some aggression against the bald head.

Bashir came up with an offer for Nazir, "By hitting the bald head, you can earn **five hundred** rupees."

"Accepting the challenge, the greedy mate rose, and positioning himself adequately, lashed out a blow at the target shouting,

"Chacha *Tajja*, *sharam kar*, *chachi ton chori filman dekhda ain?*"

(Uncle Taj, you should be ashamed of yourself. You are enjoying movies without the knowledge of your wife).

Startled, the man looked back and said, "I am not Taj".

The aggressor immediately rendered an apology and explained,

“Actually, I have an uncle-cum-friend named Taj. His head bears resemblance to yours. I must regret my undue aggression.”

The victim graciously accepted the apology. The perpetrator returned to his seat and pocketed the betted amount.

After a few moments, the offender received a more attractive offer from the friend, “for repeat performance, you stand a chance to earn **a thousand** rupees.”

Nazir said “Under normal circumstances, this would constitute a difficult proposition, but I find the amount irresistible”.

The predator took some time to reposition himself behind the prey. His second blow came out to be harder than the first. Simultaneously he exclaimed,

“Chacha, toon samajhda ain mein teinu pehchania naeen?!”

(What made you think that I would err in identifying you?)

The victim was part confused, part furious. In an irritated tone he tried to explain,

“Look, I told you I am not Taj.”

The aggressor shouted back,

“Shut up, you liar. No wonder you are named *chacha jhoota*.”

The hot argument went on for a while.

Finally, the belligerent managed a safe exit by way of apologies and blamed the occurrence on the dim cinema lights.

With great reluctance, the victim accepted the apology.

The youth returned to his seat and wasted no time in collecting his due amount.

Foreseeing that the aggression could occur yet again, the victim moved to a vacant seat to his right.

The predators noted his movement and the intuition about the next step was telekinetic. The gambler came up with final offer of the day,

“Do you want to earn another **two thousand** rupees?”

“There is no reason not to” was the reply from Nazir. It took him no time to take up position for the ultimate assault. Striking the prey the hardest possible way, he shouted,

“Oye chacha, sharam kar, toon aithay beitha ain tay maar othay beithay ik shareef aadmi noo pva ditti aye!”

(Stupid uncle, you are enjoying here in comfort and consequently a gentleman occupying another seat got all the beating!)

MEDIA

The Choice of Collections

American and Russian Presidents happened to sit next to each other in an international conference. The latter asked the former, "Mr President, what is your hobby?" He responded, "I collect jokes that people make about me." Reply to the same question by the Russian President was, "I collect people who make jokes about me".

The Australian Accent

In the Australian accent of English, some syllables are stretched. For instance, 'name' becomes 'naeem' and 'date' is pronounced as 'diet'. A British visiting an Australian hospital stayed unattended for 25 hours or so. At last on seeing a nurse, he angrily exclaimed, "Did I come here to die?" The nurse naively replied, "No, you came *yesterdie*."

Deep Breathing Germs

Pakistani: Deep breathing kills germs.

Indian: But how do you make the germs breathe deep?

Winston Churchill

Sheep in Sheep Clothes

In the British House of Commons, a MP with a weak physique painted a bleak picture of the nation, foreseeing no improvement.

Churchill as Leader of the House responded,

“You are a sheep in sheep clothes”.

To Bernard Shaw

George Bernard Shaw was a personal friend of the Prime Minister. He sent two tickets to Winston Churchill for his show. On the envelope he wrote, “For you and a friend, if there is one”.

Churchill sent the tickets back with the note, “Unable to attend this show; will attend the next, if there is one.”

To the Opposition Leader

Before the start of a parliament session, the leader of the opposition in the House of Commons approached Winston Churchill and said,

“Mr Prime Minister, may I borrow two pence from you to call an opposition member?”
Handing him 10 pence, Churchill said,

“Take these and call all’.

Chairman Mao on J F Kennedy

A journalist asked Chairman Mao, “Sir, what, in your opinion, could have happened, had Khuruchev been assassinated in place of JFK?”

He replied, “I wonder if his widow would have considered marrying the Greek Billionaire”.

Qaddafi on Reagan

Qaddafi, the late Libyan President, once remarked about the contemporary American President,

“Ronald Reagan cannot be a good president. Firstly, he is an actor and secondly; even in acting, his quality is poor”.

Hitler’s Generosity with the Prisoners

One day, Adolf Hitler was in a good mood. He called the prisoners of war belonging to different countries and said,

“I will ask you some questions. For correct answers, you will be duly rewarded.”

The first prisoner was presented before him.

Hitler: Which country are you from?

Prisoner of War: Sir, **France**.

Hitler: What is the capital of France?

POW (amazed at the question being so simple):

Sir, Paris.

Hitler: Good, your answer is correct and you can go to Paris.

Another prisoner was called in.

Hitler: Which country are you from?

POW: **Spain**, Sir.

Hitler: Name the capital of Spain.

POW: Madrid it is, Sir.

Hitler: Excellent, go to Madrid at will.

Hitler (to the next prisoner): Name the country of your origin.

POW: **England**, Sir.

Hitler: What is the capital of England?

POW: It is London, Sir.

Hitler (addressing his staff): Hang this prisoner till death.

Staff: Why, Sir? His answer is correct.

Hitler: Yeah, but he knows too much.

Hitler (to another prisoner): Name the country of your origin.

POW: **England**, Sir.

Hitler: Name the capital of England.

POW: London, Sir.

Hitler: You will go to two places.

POW: (Very happy to hear that some tourism had been arranged for him).

Thank you, Sir.

Hitler: Your upper half will go to London and the lower equivalent to Liverpool.

Violation of Exclusivity

A set of pegs had been placed in the Cadets Mess entrance in the RAF Academy, Cranwell. The aim had been to facilitate the visiting officers in hanging their raincoats. It was noticed that the pegs were being used by cadets too.

To emphasize exclusivity, the management placed a notice above the pegs which read," *Only for Officers*". After a few days, it was noticed that someone had added in pencil," *Can also be used for hanging coats*".

Mrs versus Widow

A man knocked on a door. When the lady of the house opened the door and greeted him, he asked," Are you Widow Jones".

She responded," No, I am Mrs Jones".

The visitor said," Wait till you see what I have brought for you".

He then presented her the coffin of her spouse kept hidden behind the wall thus far.

Pumping Air to Inflate Ego

Georges Clemenceau, the Tiger of France, was riding to the Versailles peace conference. As the car rolled along the Paris streets, his secretary grumbled," the diplomatic speeches are nothing but pumping hot air into one another for inflation of the ego." The executive replied, "All etiquette is hot air, but that is what is in our automobile tires. See how it eases the bumps."

Deaf Judgement

A Chief Executive had a deaf old employee who had served him for the life time. To the CE, the man was a trusted friend apart from being a servant. At the conclusion of some vital discussions, the executive used to ask his opinion. Despite his disability, the old man was always right in judging the participants taking wrong stance. When asked as to how he came up with the right judgement, the veteran replied, "I just watch as to who gets angry first".

The Zoo Picnic

A woman with six children was purchasing tickets at a zoo counter. The receptionist asked, "Are these all yours or are you on a picnic?" She responded, "They are all mine, and it is no picnic."

Monkey for a Child

A woman carrying an infant entered a bus. A passenger commented, "What an ugly child". Furious, she repeatedly shouted that she wanted to hit the offender. When all efforts to dissuade her failed, a man offered, "Ok, then hand this monkey over to me and implement your offensive."

Fight in a Movie

I went to watch a movie. There was a big fight scene there. And then I looked front and watched the movie.

The Milk with the Animal Content

On purchasing milk, the customer complained to the seller, "Can you see this frog in your product?" The seller replied, "For a hundred rupees, you can only get a frog. Did you expect a camel therein?"

The Fine Difference between Exit and Entrance

A police officer reported to his station from a scene of incidence,

"Sir, we have surrounded a house with a thief inside."

“Excellent”, encouraged his senior, “Now, put a man at each exit.” In a few minutes, the station received another call, “Sir, the thief ran away.” “How come?” the senior inquired, “Didn’t you have a man deployed at each exit?” “Sir, I did,” he replied, “but the thief ran through the entrance.”

Does the Dog Know the Rule?

A man said to his friends, “When you see a dog, just sit down. Considering you harmless, it will therefore refrain from biting you.” A friend said, “You know this rule; now we too know it, but does the dog know this rule?”

Zebra Children

A darkish person intending to marry a white girl was asked by a friend,
“But who will be responsible for the zebra children?”

Zebra Crossing

On seeing a pedestrian crossing a road, a man said, “There is a zebra crossing ahead.” The pedestrian naively replied, ‘I hope the animal survives the traffic.

Adventures in Tourism

A frightened tourist asked the guide if there were any bats in the cave being visited. The guide replied, “Don’t worry. The snakes ate them all.”

The Coughing Practice

Doctor: *Your coughing seems much better today.*

Patient: *That is because I have been practising all night.*

The Correct Choice of Drink

In a London suburb, a stranger approached an old resident walking outside his house and asked him about an address. It was a warm sunny day of July. The resident felt that the address being complicated required drawing of a map.

He invited the guest in and having him comfortably seated, proceeded to the kitchen to return with a cold drink. Placing the beverage on the table, the resident asked the visitor his name. The guest replied, "I am Aegeus **Socrates** from Athens". Retrieving the drink the host headed towards the kitchen. When asked, he said, "I know your favourite beverage. The cold drink will be replaced with poison."

Shahabnama

Qudratullah Shahab the famous author writes in his book Shahabnama that he was taught Urdu by a Sikh teacher. While explaining Ghalib, the teacher was asked frequent questions by the class. In desperation he said, "Ghalib shair likhda mar gaya tey mein samjaundhian mar jana"

(Ghalib died due to excessive effort required in writing. I will meet the same fate due to similar effort necessary to explain poetry).

INDIAN

National Bird for Khalistan

A meeting of the Khalistan Movement was in progress in Canada. Dr Jagjit Singh Chohan and Mr Ganga Singh Dhillon headed the meeting. The meal was served during the meeting. The agenda item was to select national bird for the independent state of Khalistan. There were different suggestions. Dhillon then pointed to the meal contents. "Kentucky Fried Chicken is our national bird" he remarked.

Recounting Feats of the Forefathers

A Hindu, a Muslim and a Sikh were recounting feats of their forefathers.

The Hindu boasted, "My grandfather prepared eye drops. They were cure for almost all eye diseases".

The Muslim claimed, "My grandfather prepared a digestive medicine which was a remedy for all the stomach ailments".

Not to be outdone, the Sikh said, "My grandfather prepared a type of glue. It was strong enough to put together virtually any broken pieces. For instance, my uncle lost the lower half of his body in an accident. When my grandfather was apprised of

the situation, he remained totally cool. He had the family cow cut from the required line and with perfect expertise, glued upper part of my uncle's body to the lower part of the cow. The repair work was a total success.

Now we have a two-in-one at home.

Chachay da chacha, te gaeen di gaeen (uncle and a cow).

Jidon marzi dhar kad lao (available to be milked at will)".

IAF Aircraft Performance

The Indian Air Chief was briefing his pilots on performance of a freshly inducted aircraft. He said, "This aircraft goes up at 500 kph".

Someone questioned, "Sir, what speed does it come down at?"

"Shut up!" retorted the Chief, "That is none of your business. The PAF is responsible for this part of the operation."

Reasons for some Indian actions

- How do Indians count the **cows**?

By counting their legs and dividing the sum by 4.

- Why did 40 Indians die in a **submarine**?

The power plant of the vessel failed and they came out to push for a restart.

- Why do 'Sikhs' wear a **turban** on their head?

To remember direction of the sky.

- Why do Indians put one **TV** on top of the other?

To see the full picture.

- Why do Indians press the '**Lift**' button twice?

To reach the intended floor in half the time.

- How do Indians prepare **milkshake**?

By hitting at the feet of the cow before each milking.

- How do Indians prepare **chocolate milk**?

By feeding chocolate to the cow before each milking.

- Why did an Indian mother of four refuse to have the **fifth** child?

She learnt that every fifth child born in the world was a Chinese.

- Why do Indian women **walk** in front of the men at Jeddah?

There is a danger that with men in front, the Indian women would be tempted to elope with Pakistanis who are more handsome and richer than their Indian counterparts.

- Why do Indians have upset **stomach** at Jeddah?

In India, they eat once every three days. At Jeddah, they start eating thrice a day.

- Indian **population** is 6 times bigger than Pakistan. How does Pakistan cope with the numerical inequality?

One out of every 7 Indians dies at birth due to nutritional deficit. Next one is killed by Pakistanis. Seeing his fate, two more Indians die of fear and three more perish due to lack of intellect.

- Why did a Pakistani **hit** an Indian the fifth time at Jeddah?

Earlier, the Pakistani had hit the Indian four times. The judge sentenced him to pay 80 riyals to the Indian in compensation. The former handed the victim a 100 riyal bill and the latter did not have the change.

MISCELLANEOUS

Names of Books

Some book titles and their writers appear mutually funny. The reader enjoys noticing the dissimilarity or sometimes similarity between the book and the writer name.

Book	Writer
Sheep Farming	Abbot Wolf
Safety of the Electrical Appliances	Alfred Spark
The Straight Path	Alex Spinner
Latest Jokes	Aldridge Sober
Slow and Steady	Afton Speed
Northern Hemisphere	Adam South
Desert Heat	Abram Snow
Indispensable	Abbot Spare
The Old Age Problems	Bob Young
Smooth Skin	Tom Wrinkle
Fair Weather Friends	Aden Cloud
Lighthouse	Jonathan Dimmer
Eating Manners	Afton Belcher
The Desert Clothing for Summers	Aaron Woolen
Peacetime Strategy	Henry Battle
Sensitivity of Human Relations	Philip Savage

Rules of the Air	Norman Crow
Fresh Water Lakes of the World	Malcolm Fish
The Neck Exercises	G. Rarf (<i>Giraffe</i>)
How to Improve your Memory	Ivor Gott (<i>I forgot</i>)
Managing the Wife and the Children	David Bachelor
Dress code	Jack Barefoot
Who is who	Keith Donahue (<i>don't know who</i>)

MANSAB SPECIAL

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GROWING UP IN POTOHAR

Looking Back

When I look back at my childhood, Attock was important to me for Makhaddi Halwa and Talagang for golden Khusas. After merger and creation of new district Chakwal, the area is important to me because in the ancient times, the Indian Ocean extended up to this place and Tuzke Babri was written while the Moghul Emperor Babar stayed in Kallar Kahar. The other features of Potohar are the famous lakes like Khabbeki, Nammal, Uchali and Kallar Kahar. A milestone of the region is that a Hindu boy of Buchal Kalan converted to a Muslim and served as a Headmaster in the local school.

The Animal Performances

As boys we liked the humour relating to animal performances. The snake charmers, the bear men and the monkey performers all came up with humorous description of their performances. I found the female monkey ready for the wedlock the most interesting. Similarly the jugglers and the magicians coined interesting stories about their feats to captivate attention.

Early School Days

During my Class Three at the village school, two naughty characters were in mutual competition to concoct stories. The first one by the name Hayat would come in the morning with different colours appearing on his face. He attributed these to the nocturnal visits of fairies to his place. Not to be outdone, his rival Ghulam Muhammad came up with his story. He laid claim to sharing bed regularly with a genie, who never forgot to bring toys for GM. I have learnt through experience that one tends to remember the humorous colleagues more than others.

PESHAWAR

The Novice Swimmer

During my studies in Islamia College Peshawar, a good recreation was to spend the summer afternoons in the college swimming pool. One day a freshly arriving student inquired a senior member about the deep and the shallow sides of the pool. Not aware of the limited swimming ability of the questioner, the lively senior pointed out the two sides wrongly for fun sake.

The new comer jumped in the deep and surfaced above water for a short while. He went down and despite his hardest effort was unable to stay afloat. Somehow, I happened to keep a track of his activity. Fortunately, I had enough skill to pull him out with assistance from another colleague. Soon this story spread in the college.

Moral of the Story. A businessman asked his son to jump from the third floor. The son did and ended up in the hospital. When asked for the reason behind his mischief, the father replied, "don't trust even your father in business life".

The Self-Confessing Khattaks

In Peshawar, I heard a saying by Khushal Khan Khatak.

Bhang ba largey nashee, Khattak ba sarey nashee (The bhang plant cannot be wood and a Khattak is unable to be a man). I am yet to meet a Khattak who took offence to this narration. No wonder Khattaks to me mean lion-hearted khans.

Swatis and Pathans

I also learnt at Peshawar what Pathans thought of Swatis. It was normal to hear a Pathan telling friends that he had visited a place where there had been only six pathans with rest of the residents being Swatis. Again I never met a Swati who did not share laughter on hearing this narration. Well done Swatis for being supporting.

Barra Shopping

Barra shopping was as crazy in my student life as of today. In those days we had to go to Landi Kotal on the border of Afghanistan. Some old cups are still in use at my residence. They are older than all my children.

There was no electricity in my village in those days and most of the people would ask me to bring a German - made lantern for them. During my last visit to the village I was surprised to see an old Lantern being used in one of the house.

ENGINEERING

In my engineering career spanning over half a century, I heard the following one-liners about engineers and engineering.

Proverbs on Electrical Engineers

Electrical engineers do things on impulse.

Electrical engineers do things with capacity.

Electrical engineers do things with more frequency.

Electrical engineers do things with more power.

Electrical engineers do things with less resistance.

Electrical engineers do things with less energy.

Electrical engineers do things with greater efficiency.

Electrical engineers are shocked to see wrong steps being taken.

Mechanical Engineers

Mechanical engineers do things with stress and strain.

Chemical Engineers

Chemical engineers do things in fluidised beds.

Reservoir Engineers

Reservoir engineers do things thoroughly.

Reservoir engineers do things with a lot of simulation.

Number of Engineers Required

How many **first year** engineering students does it take to change a light bulb?

None, that is a second year question.

How many **second year** engineering students does it take to change a light bulb?

One. But rest of the class copies the report.

How many **third year** engineering students does it take to change a light bulb?

Will this question be in the final examination?

How many **electrical engineers** does it take to change a light bulb?

None. They simply redefine darkness as the industry standard.

How many **mechanical engineers** does it take to change a light bulb?

Five. One to decide which way the bulb ought to turn, one to calculate the force required, one to design a tool with which to turn the bulb, one to design a handgrip and one to use all this equipment.

How many **civil engineers** does it take to change a light bulb?

Two. One to do it and the other to steady the chandelier.

How many **computer engineers** does it take to change a light bulb?

Why bother? The socket anyway will be obsolete in six months.

How many **nuclear engineers** does it take to change a light bulb?

Seven. One nuclear engineer is required to install the new bulb. Six more are needed to figure out what to do with the old one for the next 10,000 years.

Start-up Engineer

A start-up engineer is someone who solves a problem you did not know you had, in a manner you did not understand.

AIR FORCE

Learning to Wish the Seniors

On arrival at Lower Topa for initial training, my course members assembled at a defined location. During the assembly a senior cadet tasked me to wish him. To oblige I said, "I wish you good luck".

Rather than being satisfied, the senior showed annoyance. He asked a cadet senior to my course to demonstrate the correct method of wishing the seniors. To this the demonstrator shouted, "Salam Alaikum Sir". I was told to repeat the newly learnt lesson ten times.

As if in bonus I was also to carry out front rolls for a similar number of times.

Cherat Posting

My first posting after graduation was to a radar squadron located at Cherat near Peshawar. We were a few PAF officers staying in the Special Services Group (SSG) Officers Mess. The young commandos undergoing SSG training constituted the bulk of the mess residents.

Soon we started to hear from the trainees the expressions like carrying out five Chappris or six Pabbis. Such sentences sounded Greek to the PAF employees. Curious, they asked the SSG trainees about their meanings. It was a revelation to us that the sentences meant the specific number of visits on foot to the two geographical locations by the names Chappri and Pabbi. While Chappri is about five miles down the hill, Pabbi is located a good about ten miles from Cherat on the Grand Trunk Route.

For a normal person, even one visit to these places would be unimaginable. No wonder, the Pakistani commandos are second to none.

The Commando Adventures in the Kitchen

While the crazy commandos ventured out sometimes at their very peril, at times their ventures were as soft as cooking. Some could prepare chappal kababs better than

the namak mandy experts. The ability to make samosas and pakoras seemed the essential part of SSG training.

Inter-services Exercise

During the deployment phase in one of the inter-services exercises in 1980s, it was revealed to the management that my missile squadron had been deployed at an erroneous geographical location.

In an effort to move to the correct position, a letter was written to the responsible authorities requesting for provisioning of **three** trucks on **second** day of the month. On receiving no trucks on the due date, communication was established with the army. To our surprise the army staff had interpreted our demand as **two** trucks required on **third** day of the month. The error was arrested but not without suffering a short delay.

Moral of the Story. Such basic errors during exercises highlight their possible impact on outcome of a war operation. A wise war planner might include such stories as lessons learnt. Put lightly such messages tend to stay.

Special Treats

When friends visit me after travelling thousands of miles from abroad, they are not interested in KFC, McDonald or Pizza Hut. They want Buns Road Lassi or Farzand Kulfi. Dal of Mian jee da Hotel on GT road and Rahwali Kulfi are still the hot favourites.

A Useful Friend

In 1970s a friend would straightaway book an outstation call to a common friend on arrival at my place in the evenings. As calls took long to mature in those days, I benefitted from his bookings after his departure.

Me as ADWC Officer

A friend known to me for over twenty years considered me as Air Defence Weapon Controller (ADWC) rather than an engineer. I attribute this to my long service in radars and missile squadrons.

Marriage Notice

An officer displayed his marriage notice in PAF Masroor officers mess reception. The marriage date was 25th December in late 1970s. In a few days the notice was full of comments like Happy Christmas.

MANAGEMENT

My management experience revolves around resource management during active service and trading for the PAF and Shaheen Foundation post-retirement.

Playing with Words in Evaluation Reports

Arthur Hailey, the famous novelist of the previous century, wrote in his novel “Wheels” that in the automobile industry, it was a common practice to play with words in the Employee Evaluation Reports. The aim was to convey the message to the top management without annoying the employee being reported upon.

A typical phrase used was:

“The individual is well- placed at the present level of management.”

When this remark was read out to the employee, he felt flattered for being viewed as an efficient manager. But the message conveyed to the top was,

“No need to promote him”.

Comments on Performance

In evaluation reports, there are some witty comments on employees:

He has one week experience repeated 52 times.

He is superseded. At least in his case, the Air Force did not make a mistake.

He states facts when trying to sound humble.

He is tall and that is all.

He pushes where pull is required and pulls when push is needed.

The Secret Envelopes

A newly-appointed manager spent a week at his new office with the outgoing manager. On the last day, the departing manager told the new arrival, "I have left three envelopes in the desk. Open an envelope each time you encounter a crisis."

Three months later, there came the first crisis. The manager opened the first envelope. The message said, "Blame your predecessor." He did and was let off.

Six months later, another crisis erupted. The manager opened the second envelope. It said, "Re-organise." He did and survived the crisis.

Two years later, there was yet another crisis. The manager opened the third envelope. The message read, "Prepare three envelopes."

What is a Budget?

A budget is an orderly system to live beyond your means

Why don't Accountants Read Novels?

The accountants don't read novels because the only numbers in them are the page numbers.

You and the Boss

When you take a long time, you are slow.

When your boss does the same, he is thorough.

When you do not do something, you are lazy.

When the boss does not do it, he is busy.

When you make a mistake, you are foolish.

When the boss falters, he is only human.

If you do something without being told, you are overstepping authority.

When the boss does the same that is initiative.

When you take a stand, you are rigid.

When the boss does it, he is firm.

When you talk straight, you are rude.

When the boss does the same, he is original.

When you please your boss, it is apple-polishing.

When your boss pleases his boss, it is cooperation.

When you are out of office, you are wandering.

When the boss is out of office, he is on business.

When you are off due to sickness, you are always sick.

When the boss is sick, he must be very ill.

When you apply for leave, you must be going for a job interview.

When the boss does the same, he is overworked.

Reasons for Leaving

The interviewer asked the candidate

“Your application states that you were at your last place for 25 years. Then what made you leave the place?”

“I completed my prison sentence.”

The Manager Posture

Personnel manager to new job applicant: "Why did your manager fire you?"

"Well, a manager is the man who stands around and watches others work, right?"
The young applicant replied.

"Yes, but why did he fire you?"

"He was jealous of me. A lot of workers thought I was the manager."

The Boss

A man visited a parrot shop. The first parrot was for 10000 rupees because it had beautiful appearance.

The second parrot was for 20000 rupees because it spoke beautifully.

The third parrot was for 30000 rupees. It did nothing but was considered a boss by everyone.

Definition of Committee

A committee is a group of men who individually can do nothing but as a group decide that nothing can be done.

Rules of the Committee

- Never arrive on time or else you will be viewed as a beginner.
- Don't say anything until the meeting is half over; this stamps you as being wise.
- Be as vague as possible; this prevents irritating others.
- When in doubt, suggest appointment of a sub-committee.
- Be the first to move the adjournment; everyone is waiting for this and you will be popular.

The Criteria

A manager is known by three measures:

- The thickness of the carpet in his office.

- The area of his desk.
- The volume of his car engine.

Sleeping Habits

Manager: Why are you late?

Assistant: Sir I overslept.

Manager: You mean you sleep at home as well?

The Cruel GM

A GM was in a jungle with his two managers. A genie appeared and offered them a wish each. One manager wished seeing Canada and his wish was granted. The second manager wished visiting Australia and he was put in a plane. On his turn, the GM wished that his managers be brought back and his wish too was granted.

The Chinese Menu

As GM Shaheen Aerotraders, I had to consider health of the Chinese working with me. I was careful about their meals in particular. To my amazement they had already tried all the local dishes available in the vicinity. Also, Chinese would occasionally ask for tortoise and frogs on the menu. To ensure quality and quantity they were sometimes taken out to the fields for tortoise hunting.

OVERSEAS

Halal Food

Arranging halal food in Europe became a major exercise. Missing a meal completely was a light price at times.

A group of PAF employees were sent to France for training on new equipment. On their arrival the hosts arranged a reception where snacks were also served. For

some PAF employees this visit was the first ever. Being under the cultural shock, every item tasted well to them.

One of the consumers asked the hosts about an item in snacks which he found particularly delicious. To his bad luck the item turned out to be roasted bacon.

Knowing this some of us cut a sorry figure for having overstepped the religious parameters. Two of the consumers, however, did not contend with mere regretting. They rushed to the nearest wash basin and employed suitable measures to empty the stomach of the prohibited food content. It all depends how far you want to go.

Rabbits

Pakistanis who entered Saudi Arabia illegally were called by this name. Not being in possession of legal residence documents, they were raided, arrested and deported. One of the evasive tactics employed by them was to always move in the company of a legal resident.

During a single policeman raid the legal resident would run away. After a short distance he would slow down and surrender on purpose. This gave ample time for the illegal entrant to vanish from the scene.

On police demand, the man captured would produce the required document. On question about the reason for his running he would respond that he had been afraid of the police.

When the officer asked him about his friend, he said he did not know him and that the latter was a passer-by asking for some address.

Tit for Tat

A Pakistani technician hailing from Lalu Khet, ended up in Saudi Arabia. During his stay at the Kingdom, he was ill-treated to the limits.

Whenever he demanded his due rights, the sponsor would respond, "Fain Aqama?" (Where is your resident visa?).

Even the shopkeepers were not ready to entertain him when he wanted to purchase a Pepsi tin. "Maafi Bebsi" was the reply he usually received.

In disgust, he finally returned to Pakistan and set up his own business. One day, he was on a visit to Karachi International Airport when an unfortunate Saudi national happened to ask him about some address. The Pakistani gave him a hard blow in the face and demanded, "Fain Aqama?" When the Saudi indicated protest, he

received another slap with the comment, “Maafi Bebsi”. The Saudi wanted to say something but the Pakistani kept hitting him with alternate remarks, “Fain Aqama?” and “Maafi Bebsi”.

Male in a Female Dress

A Pakistani girl of three year was visiting Saudi Arabia the first time with her mother. At the airport, on seeing Saudis in their national dress, she started shouting, “Mama, dopattay walay uncle.” (Uncles with scarf).”

Entering Paradise under Sponsorship

It was known in Saudi Arabia that if a Pakistani were asked to enter paradise on the day of resurrection, he would do on the condition that a Saudi sponsor was not required therein.

Feeding as per Entry Visa

A visitor to a zoo in Saudi Arabia saw a tiger eating bananas. He said to the tiger, “Tiger meals normally include meat, not fruit.” The tiger replied, “You are right, but I entered the Kingdom on a monkey visa”.

LA TERRAZZA

La Terrazza is an Italian restaurant opened by me and my son in Centaurus Mall, Islamabad. We have collected some humour related to restaurants.

Soup, Present and Past

Customer: *What is this?*

Waiter: *Bean soup, Sir*

Customer: *I know what it has been, but what is it now?*

Waiter Responses

Waiter, waiter, there is a dead spider in my soup. Send for the manager.

It is no good, Sir. He is frightened of them too.

Waiter, waiter, there is a bird in my soup.

That is all right, Sir. It is bird's-nest soup.

Thumb in the Soup

Diner: Watch out, your thumb is in my soup.

Waiter: Don't worry, Sir. It's not that hot.

Question Time

Did you hear about the new restaurant on the moon?

Yes, it has good food but no atmosphere.

The Thumb Cover

A waiter brought the customer the steak he ordered with the thumb over the meat.

The customer asked him the reason and he replied "I don't want it to fall again."

The Clean Cup

The waiter asked a group of diners about the tea. One of them said, "Bring my tea in a clean cup." The waiter returned with the order and confirmed, "which of you asked for the clean cup?"

Good Clientele

Notice in a restaurant read:

"Diners who are tempted to steal silverware, ashtrays and other objects belonging to this restaurant are requested to do so discreetly. We want to preserve the good reputation of our clientele."

Loose Change

Customer: "You don't seem particularly quick at figures."

Waiter: "That is because most diners ask me to keep the change. "

Paging Time

The manager rushed to a waiter whistling in the lobby. Admonishing him, the manager said, "Don't you know that whistling is not allowed during duty?"

The waiter replied in anguish," Who is whistling, Sir. The owner of this dog is visiting the washroom and I am paging his pet."

Bulb Change

How many McDonald counter girls does it take to change a light bulb?

Two; one to change the bulb and another one to put some fries with it.

NEAR AND DEAR ONES

Saadia's Favourite Deer

While I was posted to Masroor Base, in my neighbourhood, the pet deer of the neighbours died. My four year old daughter Saadia was very fond of this deer. She missed the deer and would narrate the story to all neighbours. Mostly it was narrated to her favourite uncle Rafique over and over. In every narration she hardly missed any details.

Amina's Innocence

The youngest among my siblings, Amina would respond to the question by uncle Rafique in very innocent way.

Uncle Rafique: “Aap kis kee beti hain”

Amina would respond as

” Abu Ki, Ammi ki aur Aap ki bhi, after a pause.”

She sounded cute and we always enjoyed it.

RAFIQ EXCLUSIVE

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SANDAL BAR SMILES

An Early Memory of Humour

Fazal, the elder brother of my father had a friend at my village who always carried a stick due to a problem with his leg. We had barbers living next door who kept a white

dog. The pet was a favourite of the entire neighbourhood and was normally very docile, but it would always bark at my uncle's friend.

Curious, the visitor wanted to know the reason behind the pet taking him as an exception. He concluded that the dog did not find his stick very friendly.

"No," my uncle remarked promptly, "I have seen him bark at all the beggars." As a child of 5 years, I remember hearing a roar of laughter from 10 odd customers waiting at the barber thara (platform).

How to Ensure the Trust of a Non-Family Member

Non-family friends are considered less trustworthy than blood relations in the villages. One of our veteran neighbours once trusted a non-family youth to look after his belongings. Due to negligence of the youth, some items were lost to a thief. In anguish the veteran commented, "*Baiganay banday de hath sap pharrao, je dhilla chhadday te unhun larray.*" (Trust a non-family member only with a snake. Should he let it loose, the serpent must bite him to death).

The Mahiya of College Days

The following Mahiya verse was popular amongst friends:

"Sonay da kil Mahiya"

(A nail made of gold).

"Lokan diyan roan akhiyan"

(For the people, normally the eyes weep).

"Saada roanda aye dil mahiya"

(In our case, it is the heart which performs the function of weeping).

The following **parody** was applied when a friend entered a restaurant where you were already feasting on your order. He would sing:

"Sonay da kil Mahiya"

"Nashta karao sanu"

(Order a breakfast for me as well)

"Naale chah noon vi dil Mahiya"

(I also feel the urge for tea).

The reply would normally include something like:

“Sonay da kil Mahiya”

“Kuch nai labna tainu”

(You will not get anything here)

“Chal aithun hil Mahiya”

(Get out of here)

Ignoring your warnings sometimes, he would start placing the order.

Then you would sing:

“Sonay da kil Mahiya”

“Muft khorian noon”

“Dena paina ae bill mahiya”

(The invited guests have to pay for their part of the order).

Mostly, the ‘uninvited guests’ got away with ease.

ACADEMY

Heer at PAF Academy Lower Topa

I reported to PAF Academy Lower Topa on 21st Mar, 1972 with 58th GD (P) course. On arrival, we were received by our senior course, the 57th GD (P). This reception included all sorts of ragging.

For instance, we were asked to do frog jumps for a few hours at times. The other punishments included vacating the dining hall before arrival of the seniors, a ban on book out and compulsory running in the mess premises. Also, wishing the seniors at the top of our voice was required and a zero haircut was mandatory.

Sometimes, the seniors made it a must for everyone to sing. On my turn, I could only think of Punjabi folklore ‘**Heer**’. I recollect an odd line from the parody:

Ikki March di raat noo ath wajay

Aseen phans gaye thaon, kathan yaro

Yaad awanday sun sanu waro wari

Kadi peyo te kadi, maan yaro

(On 21st Mar, at 8 pm, we were trapped in an awkward place. We were alternatively remembering our two parents.)

The Excused Duty

At the PAF Academy, my colleague Tasneem Muzzafar was known for emphasizing each speech syllable. Once Tasneem visited the doctor and on return reported to the senior man, “I have an ED.” The way he spoke, a voice was heard, “Make it two EDs, senior man.”

The Broken Myth

Shahzada Shahid Pervez (SSP) Fazil joined 58th GD (P) course with me. He was black, tall and well-built and he never failed to advertise his ability with Judo and Karate. He was feared by all, as, he on every small matter, would go into a fighting posture to scare the adversary. His strategy did work out till he tried his luck with the mediocre Arshad Khan.

Initially, in the fight, Fazil had a clear edge over Arshad. Then, in a sudden move, Arshad took his uniform belt and commenced lashing it with full force against the rival. The belt landed at a different part of Fazil’s body each time and soon Fazil was found apologizing to Arshad.

Very graciously, Arshad accepted the apology. It soon became a practice in the course to beat up Fazil when there was nothing better to do.

The Vital Saluting Test

A senior at the academy told us that he was responsible to censor our letters written to relatives. One day he ordered our assembly and displaying a letter said, “Look, what this *disgrace* of your course has written to his mother,

“Ammi jan, saluting test paas ho gaya hai. Ab naukri pakki ho gayee hay.”

(Saluting test has been cleared and the job is thus confirmed).”

The senior had written the letter himself.

‘Heer’ Starts Flying

In 1973, our course started flying at PAF Academy Risalpur. On public demand, I prepared some ‘Heer’. I remember some lines that I presented about the Harvard aircraft and our flying instructors; Mehdi, Akbar Din and Atta represent some of them:

Take off kar diyan maarian Harvard cheekaan

Mainu circuit ton bahir ley challey

Ik banday da bhaar nai mein chuk sakda

Kyon do janay meray te beh challey

(The Harvard aircraft cried out on take-off run as to why two men had boarded the cockpit while it could hardly bear the weight of one.)

In time parade state dey deveen

Mehdi hor kuch kaday naan mangna ayn

Akbar Din diyan nazaran ton bach javeen

Tainu Atta ne puthian tangna ayn

(Mehdi won’t ask for anything other than an in time parade state. Save yourself from the sharp eye of Akbar Din. Atta is anyway going to hang you upside down).

Paratha as a Surname

At the Academy, the juniors were supposed to finish the breakfast before entry of the senior course. One of my course mates said to the juniors,

“You get up early in the morning, you bang the door ‘Thahhh!’, you eat ‘thanda dahi’ (cold curd) and ‘garam paratha’ (warm bread). When we come for breakfast, we eat garam dahi and thanda paratha.

No wonder, the word paratha became a surname for him.

TRANSPORT WING

Fun with Jaleel

My friend Jaleel never failed to comment on my moustache. Rather than responding instantly, I would let him and other colleagues enjoy his comments, and wait for my day to repay. One day, I had my moustache cut below the usual limit. He noticed it immediately and commented, "Your moustache is like ants sticking to half-eaten bread". I let him win that one.

At one time, my moustache had grown a bit long. He said, "Your moustache today resembles a pair of socks spread out for drying".

Another time, my moustache was trimmed haphazardly. He asked, "Did you apply glue to your upper lip to stick the moustache?"

On another occasion, the two sides of the moustache were unequal in length. He noticed the disparity and commented, "*Khabbi punj mint pichhay aye*"

(The left one is behind by five minutes).

On my day I told him that a Bengali had been looking for him asking,

'*Zaleel Saheb kidher hai*', "where is Mr Zaleel?" (Bengalis pronounce J as Z).

The Captain and the Sleeping Beauty

A C-130 aircraft was proceeding to Gilgit. Simultaneously, another C-130 was returning from Gilgit. The captain of the aircraft outbound to Gilgit asked the return aircraft about position of the later. The co-pilot of the inbound aircraft replied, "Abeam Sleeping Beauty".

The captain of the outbound aircraft inquired, "Is that the name you give to your captain?"

(Sleeping beauty is the name given to northern part of Nanga Parbat, a 26660 feet high peak South of Gilgit).

Description of Sri Lankans by a Friend

After his first visit to Sri Lanka, a pilot narrated the hosts as short, fat and dark.

He too meets the same parameters. However he views himself as Bill Clinton.

Ground Position

Instructor Navigator: "There is a town coming one o clock. Can you tell me the name?"

Student Navigator: "Sir, I don't know."

Instructor: "Here is a hint. Sabeeha Khanum belongs to this place."

Student: "Sir, I have no idea."

Instructor: "Nisho belongs here."

Student: "Sorry, Sir."

Instructor: "I am from this place."

Student: "It is a shame Sir, but I don't know."

Instructor: "It is Gujrat."

Student: "Really Sir? I too belong to this place."

The Inferior Navigators

A navigator visited a psychiatrist and said, "I am in an inferiority complex. My colleagues in fighters are flying the latest machines which are improving all the time. In comparison, I am considered obsolete and am being removed **from most aircraft**." The psychiatrist conducted a number of tests on him and concluded, "You are not in any inferiority complex. You are actually inferior."

The Aircraft on Outbound Track

A PAF C-130 was on an outbound track from the eastern United States when the ATC (Air Traffic Control) called for the position report.

Aircraft: " We have trackid (tracked) outbound Radial 040 of JFK Airport VOR (Visual Omni Ranging) and our DME (Distance Measuring Equipment) reading is 65 at the moment. "

ATC: " Say again after 'track'. "

Milk Selling Pilot

A C130 pilot had set up a mini dairy farm at his residence. He kept buffalos in the backyard of his big house and started selling milk. It was mid-1980s when the milk was available at ten rupees to a litre.

A friend asked the dairy merchant about the milk rate. The latter came up with a figure of 12 rupees a litre. The businessman – in - uniform explained that because

the milk supplied by him was totally devoid of any water content, his charges were higher in relation to the market.

The potential customer offered, "OK. I will pay you 13 rupees per litre but on one condition; you will deliver the milk in person."

The Correct Introduction on the Phone

A senior crew member had booked a call on Transport Mess extension. The phone rang. He picked it and said, "X, this side".

The voice on the other end said, "Are you Chachu X speaking?" and the phone was dropped.

After a few moments, the phone rang again. Mr. X picked the phone and said, "Group Captain X."

"That's better", said the caller and dropped the phone yet again.

Co Pilot's Primary Duty

A co-pilot was asked by the Captain about his primary duty in the cockpit. The co-pilot replied that responding to incoming calls constituted his pivotal role.

Captain:

"Are you doing this duty?"

Co-Pilot:

"No Sir."

Captain:

"Then why should I not carry a sand bag on my right than having you on board?"

Friendly Narrations

A transport pilot was known for his friendly narration of his missions. The duration of each narration equalled twice the flying time. I was his favourite target. I tried to adopt various tactics to evade him, but to no avail. Many a times, I offered him the choice of giving me alternate punishments like 'orderly officer duties', but nothing worked out. His speed was so fast that he could easily win a 'maximum words per

minute' contest held in any part of the globe. 40 years on, and things haven't changed a bit. The only thing is that flying activity has been replaced by routine life on ground.

The Accommodation Problem

After his marriage, a friend of mine was not provided with the service accommodation for some time. Concerned that he must be upset, I used to ask him off and on about his position on the waiting list.

In an attempt to make me jealous he started to tell me each time, "I have the luxury of living with my in-laws."

To serve him right, I rephrased the question,

"Accommodation mili ya abhi bhi sasural ke tukron pe pal rahe ho?"

(Have you been allotted the service accommodation, or, are you still living on leftovers of the in-laws?)

Air Traffic Calls by Name

As a routine the first officer is normally responsible to handle communication. However, in no way does this practice prevent the captain from responding to the incoming calls particularly when the first officer is not in the seat.

A first officer left the cockpit briefly. There were calls coming in but the captain just did not respond. When the first officer returned, the captain complained, "You took so long and ATC kept calling you." The first officer remarked, "Did ATC call me by name each time, Sir?"

BOMBERS

Heer at Masroor Base

I served in No 7 Light Bomber Squadron in late 1970s and early 1980s.

Heer was presented once again. I remember some parts.

Zaigham was OC Flying Wing commanding the parade.

Iqbal A Khan and Tanweer Hussain were the outgoing and incoming OC No. 7 LB Sqn respectively, KMK was OC No 2 Fighter Conversion Unit (FCU) and Changezi the most feared Base Commander of all times:

Parade kar diyan maar dey lok cheekaan

Subah 7 wajay ton, bulaya aye

Ajay 9 ee wajjay nain, sabr karo

Ajay form up ee nain, karaya aye

People are crying on the parade square that they have been called since 7 am. It is already 9 am, but even the form up has not been ordered so far

Zaigham shun tey kar kay bhul gaya

Jao onhu koyee yaad, kara diyo

Lattan kamban tey challan pasiney sadey

Sanoo hor na tussi, saza diyo

After having ordered the parade to *attention*, Zaigham forgot to order it back to *ease*. Someone should remind him. Our legs are shivering with fatigue and we are all in sweat. Do not punish us anymore

Parade square de bahrkhalo ke te Ilayas
Majeed pia nukte kad da aye

Flight Commander te koyee shae ee naeen

Aye te Zaigham noon vee naeen chad da
aye

Standing outside the parade square, Ilyas Majeed is busy finding faults. What to talk of flight commander, he does not

spare even Zaigham.

11 wajay parade jad khatam hoi

Tey hair cut dee inspection, shuru hoi

Hair cut dee inspection khatam hoi

Tey flight safety meeting, shuru hoi

At last when the parade did come to an end at 11 am, the haircut inspection started off. When this ended, it was time for the flight safety meeting

Shuru hoi tey khatam na ho saki

Gallan vich diyan vich ee, reh gayyan

Nawain order paye milde nai heth uttay

Aye meetingaan jaran vich, beh gayan

It did take a start but never came to a planned ending. The matters were left unfinished. New orders are being dished out one after the other. These meetings are now taking their toll

Iqbal Khan nain meena bazar laya

Tey board thaana thaana kharray, kara dittay

Jahaz jinhen vee onhain start keetay

Sab de starter, bitha ditte

Iqbal Khan has arranged a Meena Bazar. He has had sign boards erected everywhere for advertising the bazaar. As for his flying ability, he rendered the starters of all attempted aircraft unserviceable

KMK ton qurban jawaan

Jehra sub da beli, yaar banda

Aye dekhani noon lagda aye dhilla
Dar asal aye bara, hoshyar banda

Hats off to KMK. He is a friend of everyone. He appears naïve but is actually quite clever

Mauripur wich aa key ais banday
Koi lakhani rupayya, wattia aye
Maal Barey da ainain chuk kay tey
Saara chor bazar wich, satya aye

Since his arrival at Mauripur, he has made hundreds of thousands. He has transported all the goods from Bara to Chor Bazar

Tanveer Hussain ney aa key nawan nawan
7 squadron da bar, uthaya aye
Saudi Arab chon paisay kama kay tey
Aye te barri ee phook vich, aya aye

Tanveer Hussain has freshly taken over the reins of No 7 squadron. After having earned fat money in Saudi Arabia, he is in high airs

Aye samajhda aye har koi aihdi manke
Approved di mohr, laga daye ga
Mulaqat jad hoyee Base Commander de naal
Barri cheti aye hosh vich, aa jaye ga

He thinks that everyone will put **approved** stamp on his requests. When he meets the Base Commander, he will come to his senses sooner than

expected

Chal shud hun gal noon, dar vat ja

Changezi dey kanneen na pe jaway

Court martial te chalo koi gal naeen

Kitey siddha ee na ghar, bhijwa devay

Okay stop it right there and remain quiet,
or else the word may reach Changezi.
You might survive a Court Martial, but
what if he sent you home without
assigning a reason?

Absence from Duty

At No 7 Light Bomber Squadron, one day, a pilot friend of mine failed to show up for duty in the morning. I rang up his residence. The lady picked up the phone and I asked her about the reason for her spouse being absent.

She told me that he had picked up flu and that he had been coughing throughout the previous night. She added that he also had high fever.

When asked as to how high the fever had gone,

She said, "At one point, it had reached as high as 99 degrees Fahrenheit".

The readers not familiar with the Fahrenheit readings might like to know that 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit is the normal body temperature and this reading can easily reach 103 degrees during a flu.

Sensing the exaggerated concern of a lady about her spouse, I said, "Madam, if he survives by any chance, please ask him to call me".

Easy Way to Remember a Marriage Date

A pilot colleague of mine hailed from a village. We were together in No. 7 Lighter Bomber Squadron in 1978.

Every few days, he would tell me,

"Meri Aprail mein shadi hay."

(I am getting married in April.)

I have never forgotten his marriage date since.

Violating Exclusivity

For the morning session of 'Flying Wing', it was customary for crew members to enter the briefing room through the back entrance. Only the supervisors had the privilege of entering through the front door.

Flying Officer Obaid Jatoi always entered through the front door. So unanimously he was promoted to Squadron Leader Jatoi.

A Bit Satisfied Sindhis

Azizullah Qazi, a pilot hailing from Tando Adam area, had worked with me in the PAF. He had always complained that Sindhis had been deprived of their due rights. He took early retirement and joined the PIA.

I met him once at Islamabad airport along with his first officer with the surname Khoso. On introduction, I found out that the first officer too hailed from Sindh.

I said to Qazi, "Sindhis should be happy now that they are getting their due."

He replied, "That reminds me that jealousy is your other problem."

Iftari in the Language of a Child

A PAF neighbour of mine had a 4 year old son. He would call 'iftari' as 'raftari' in the holy month of Ramadan. He sounded so cute that raftari is used as his nick name even today.

Ordering Sharbat on Phone

A senior PAF officer normally responded to an incoming call with "Sharbat here".

So one day, a young caller ordered, "Bring it here".

On another occasion, the caller responded, "Cup of tea speaking. How are Pepsi and Coca Cola?"

The Fly Past Cat Calls

During the 23rd March fly past by the PAF aircraft, it was usual to hear an odd cat call. In one of these exercises, such calls were overdone a bit. So one of the senior crew members came in angrily “Shut up all of you!” For a few moments, the calls did come to an end till someone said, *Bakri hogaye o?*” (So you chickened out !) No wonder, the calls restarted.

Nawab Saheb over Nawab Shah

A number of B-57s were flying in a low level stream with five minutes stagger between consecutive aircraft. As per the SOP, the aircraft were required to report when overhead the turning points. One of the aircraft failed to report his position. On a call from the stream leader, the aircraft reported to be over Nawab Shah. This was not at all the expected position of the aircraft in question. So, in disgust, the leader shouted, “What are you doing at Nawab Shah, Nawab Saheb?”

ATC Calls and Responses

A B-57 bomber called the ATC for joining instructions. The ATCO replied in a fake western accent, “Join Runway 27, *Altameter* 2955”.

Aircraft: “Confirm *Altameter* 2955”

ATC: “Righto”

Aircraft: Texaco, Bingo, SATCO, DATCO

(Texaco and Bingo represent fuel figures under standard parameters).

(SATCO and DATCO are abbreviations for Senior and Duty Air Traffic Control Officer respectively).

Midway and All - the Way - Through call

The call sign of the Base Commander was “Midway 10”. He had just finished responding to an ATC call when a voice called him, “Confirm, you are midway”.

“That is affirmative”, the Base Commander replied.

Caller: “Roger, I am already through.”

The Call Sign Confusion

At one time, the call sign of a Base Commander was Shah Jehan 10.

Someone took the liberty and started addressing him as Noor Jehan 10.

A ‘Cat Call’ to a Senior Pilot

A senior PAF pilot had been calling the SOC (Sector Operations Centre) to report his position. Despite repeated efforts, there was no response from the SOC.

Another PAF aircraft in air at the time understood the situation, so he decided to take advantage. He called in the guise of the SOC and requested for a repeat of the position. This having been done, the *acting* SOC called in, “*Khadim 41, bariyaan khidmataa kar rahe o. khoob taraqqi karo gey!*” (Khadim 41, you are rendering a lot of good services. You sure will do well in the PAF). After considering his options, the senior pilot thought it best to remain quiet on the subject. Such grace was commonly displayed by senior crew members in good old days.

Romeo and Juliette in the Cockpit

I was the navigator of a B-57 aircraft on a low level strike with a senior pilot namely Flight Lieutenant Jilani. A radar controller in SOC (Sector Operation Centre) recognized my voice and said, “Confirm Romeo”. Before I could respond to the call, the navigation leader, Squadron Leader Ehtesham flying another B-57 came up on radio and said, “Yes, and he is with Juliette.”

In aviation, to make clear distinction amongst similar sounding alphabets a universally accepted code is followed while transmitting messages. For instance A is Alpha, B, bravo, R, Romeo and J is Juliette.

To Whom it may Concern

The B-57 was on its way to Jaisalmer in India to drop bombs during the 1971 war. It was a night mission. Flight Lieutenant Ejaz Syed was the pilot. With him was a navigator, recalled from PIA for war duties, Flight Lieutenant (Retired) Subhani, recalled from PIA for war duties.

After take-off, the main compass system of the aircraft started displaying erroneous direction. All the checks confirmed that the system could not be relied upon directional guidance. Under normal conditions, the mission would have been aborted without any second thoughts. War is a matter of national survival and the PAF is second to none in acknowledging this reality. The crew members are determined to accomplish the assigned mission at their very peril.

Ejaz asked Subhani about his comfort level under the prevailing circumstances. Ejaz was also conscious of the fact that having been recalled from PIA, Subhani was not fully current on flight operations. Subhani reassured him that there was no cause for concern. A few minutes later Ejaz consoled Subhani in the lighter vein, "Sir, if a bullet is meant to hit you, it will." Subhani said, "Yes Ejaz. I am not worried about the bullets specified for Ejaz or Subhani. I am only worried about the one labelled '*To whom it may concern*'".

The Cultural Shock

An Air Force cadet belonging to a village started to wear a tie as per the dress code. He did perfectly well except that when he was called from behind; instead of turning his neck, he would take a 180 degree turn before saying 'Yes'.

The Reason for Relegation

I introduced a course mate to friends in a party as follows:

"Please meet Air Commodore X. Initially he was my course mate. However, on account of poor overall performance, he was relegated to the next course."

You can imagine what must have transpired once the guests left.

MIANWALI

Thrill Seeker and Drill Seeker

I served in No 1 Fighter Conversion Unit as the chief ground instructor from 1983 to 1985. After successful training at Risalpur the pilots are trained at this unit for conversion onto fighter aircraft. I was responsible for the academic and the general training of the young officers.

At times I put them on drill square for discipline purposes. A flying instructor, Salman Usmani was known for being extra cautious while flying. In humour, the students named him Salman, the thrill seeker. The students have the freedom to take revenge on instructors on the graduation night.

On one such night, two of the students played Maula Jat and Noori Nat roles.

The one impersonating Maula Jat started,

“Tenu mein Salman thrill seeker nal flying vastay lawan ga oye Natta”

(I will schedule you with Salman, the thrill seeker for flying).

The Noori Nat replied,

“Te tenu mein Rafiq drill seeker de hawalay karaan ga oye Jatta”

(And I will hand you over to Rafiq, the drill seeker).

Another Graduation Episode

Maula: Noori, I will have you scheduled with Najam. You will then find out what surprises life can have in store for you. As for grades, he does not have the memory to count beyond 51(50 being the lowest passing grade).

Noori: I don't think you are able to perceive what I have in mind for you. You will go with Afridi to overfly Parachinar. There your engine will pack up. On ejection, you will land over mountains full of naswar.

While you could have difficulty in traversing the rugged terrain, Afridi will have the chance of a life time. Since his entry into the 'gentry', he has not had the opportunity to enjoy naswar to his heart's content.”

Best Mianwali Film

On another graduation night at FCU (Fighter Conversion Unit), the students focussed on a recently held marriage of an officer with a daughter of the Base Commander. The marriage was followed by a series of invitations by the officers for the Base Commander and the newlyweds. This was not lost on the students.

So the following is what they came up with:

Pehlwanjee:

Bubby

Bubby:

Ji, Pehlwanjee

Pehlwanjee:

Which film is doing good business nowadays?

Bubby:

Only one film is a box office hit at the moment.

Pehlwanjee:

Which one?

Bubby:

Saura tey Jawai (The Father- in- law and the Son- in- law).

The Old Qawwal Incidence

On one of the nights at Mianwali, a comedian on stage had just started to narrate a story. He said, "*Aik budha qawwal...*" (An old qawwal...) and there was a big roar of laughter in the hall.

At that particular moment by coincidence, Maratib, a pilot who looked rather old, was just entering the hall. This was the reason for the normal audience to laugh. However, there was more to it. It was known among the inner circle of friends that Maratib hailed from a qawwal family of Jhang Mangiana.

Officer's and Doctor's Kids

Squadron Leader Shabbir, the medial specialist is a good natured man known for his capacity to laugh at himself. One day he was in the company of ten odd kids in the children park. When I asked him about the children, he pointed towards a group of them and said, "Aye afsaran de bachey nain, te baqi doctoran de.

He implied that while a section of the children comprised kids of the gentlemen officers, bloodline of the remaining lot could be traced back to individuals viewed as doctors by some people.

Nannha Suicide and Gill

A PAF pilot (at least that is what he claims) named Abdul Qayyum **Gill** (another claim by him) is known for settling scores.

When the comedian Nannha committed suicide in mid-1980s, the colleagues were trying to figure out the probable reason behind the sad incident.

A friend remarked, "He must have picked on Gill." All the remaining colleagues agreed that the cause of the incident had been correctly established.

ISSB

The Air Force Discipline in the Eyes of an Army Officer

During my stay at ISSB Gujranwala, an army officer noted with concern that unlike army, the PAF officers did not show any restraint in communicating with their seniors. He commented,

“I get the feeling that the PAF is a subordinate wing of WAPDA”

(‘WAPDA *ka zaili idara*’ is the precise term he used).

The Deputy President in Good Mood

To be selected normally at ISSB, a candidate must pass with at least two of the three selectors. If he passes with only one selector who feels strongly for him, the case is referred to the commandant for disposal.

On a ‘conference day’ at ISSB Gujranwala, I referred two such candidates who were passing with me but failing with the other two selectors.

A friend Captain Saleh Khattak remarked, “You seem to be in a good mood today. That is why you are fighting hard for your candidates.” I replied, “Yes Saleh, even you would earn a passing grade with me today.”

Punjabi and Physical Education

I was visiting my village during my ISSB tenure. My cousin Mithu asked me about my job. I told him briefly about my selection duties.

At one point, I said to him, “Look! Some candidates have ‘Punjabi and Physical Education’ as FA subjects and they want to pass ISSB tests.”

After a short while, he told me that he too had received the call letter to report to ISSB. When I asked him about his FA subjects, he said, “Punjabi and Physical Education.”

Mithu never reported to ISSB.

The Younger Plank at ISSB

During the outdoor group exercises at ISSB, it is common to hear,
“Pass me the younger plank” meaning the *smaller plank*.

Hearing Kathmandu the First Time

In an interview, a candidate was asked, “What is the capital of Pakistan?”

The reply was Islamabad. The interviewer came up with the next question, “What is the capital of Kathmandu?” The candidate burst out laughing. Under normal circumstances such laughter would only be expected as Kathmandu is a capital in itself. However the interviewer sensed that there was more to it. So he asked the candidate as to what he had found funny with the question. The latter replied. “I never heard of Kathmandu. You seem to believe that I am totally void of intellect.”

AIR WAR COLLEGE

Who has the Initiative?

In one of the War exercises, there was a prolonged argument between a faculty member (**FM**) and a course member (**CM**) over who had the initiative between the two belligerents. The discussion started to drag into an exercise in futility. Neither of the two seemed willing to give up his stance.

At this stage we were reminded of the famous wrestling contest of mid-1970s between Akki of Pakistan and Anoki of the USA. The exaggerated version of the discussion was later prepared by the course members. It goes as follows:

CM: I think we have lost the initiative, so we must pull out.

FM: I do not think that you have lost the initiative wholly. I suggest you pursue with the planned offensive.

CM: (He has a thin voice) I think we do not have the initiative.

FM: I think you do.

CM: No, we don't have the initiative.

“Mainu Sheeday ne mariya aye”

(Rasheed has beaten me).

“Pehlay onay meri akh wich ungal mari, te pher tid vich mukka mareya”

(First he poked my eye with his finger and subsequently gave me a hard punch in the stomach).

FM: *Je onay tenu mareya si, tey toon onu kyon nai mareya?*

(What prevented you from retaliating in equal terms?)

CM (crying): Because he had the initiative.

Confusion of Roots

In the Ice-breaker exercise, a course member introduced himself as:

“I am Wing Commander Khalid Tamton. My ancestors travelled from Yemen to South India a few centuries ago. The family moved to Lahore after partition of the subcontinent. My maternal origin can be traced back to Kashmir.”

On one of the days, someone wrote on the Board: “Tamton – Confused about roots”. Next day someone added, “Roots now established – a confirmed untouchable from South India”,

Name and Qualification

In an AWC exercise, I and Commander M A Khan of Pakistan Navy were to make a presentation on ‘Joint Staff HQs’. I was in the lead role.

In the introduction part of the exercise, this is what I said,

“Gentlemen, in the next 50 minutes or so, we will discuss ‘Restructuring of the Joint Staff Headquarters’. May I introduce the team members?

I, Wing Commander Muhammad Rafique, will lead the exercise with Commander M A Khan of Pakistan Navy as the member.

Now I do not know whether the initials M A qualify a name or name a qualification.”

Unofficial War Course Humour

The Air War course has some very tense phases. Any humour therefore, is handy. We were travelling by road from Kamra to Pindi at the end of a strenuous day.

A colleague Sohaib Afzal found an easy target in me and kept passing remarks on my posture, appearance and activity. The friends wanted me to respond but I confided to one of them that I could wait till his stock had been exhausted.

I had already noted that Sohaib had been wearing dark glasses hanging with threads and he had a hard surfaced wallet which, normally, is not carried by male gender.

So at my moment, I started off, "You are wearing the glasses like a widowed 'mem'? And you have a vanity box on you. I think Wilson died only recently."

He tried interjecting but I did not let him. Before he could regain composure, I said,

"O khairaan Wilson diyaan

(I wish peace to Wilson's departed soul)".

Everyone declared me the clear winner in the contest.

That day on, when Sohaib calls, some war course friends start the response with

"O khairaan Wilson diyaan"

The Iranian Innocence

An Iranian officer, Lt Col Ismael Perouvan attended the War Course with us. On introduction, I found out that he was an F-14 pilot.

I asked him about the role of an F-14 navigator. He told me that designated as an EWO; the F-14 navigator looked after electronic aspects of the warfare in addition to the routine aircraft navigation. And then he started telling me about one of his best friends, "He is a navigator and a Kurd, but a good man."

I was taken aback on this remark and said, "Mr Ismael, what you are implying is that as a rule navigators, particularly of Kurdish origin, are not good individuals and that it is an exception rather than a rule that this particular friend of yours happens to be good?" Ismael was not very fluent in English, so it took him a few days to understand what he had implied. Finally when he did take stock of the situation, he felt embarrassed and wanted to apologise.

However, he had provided the course members the golden opportunity to play with his embarrassment for the remaining course duration. Hardly a day went by when he was not reminded that Rafique had to be bad purely on account of being a navigator. Similarly when he talked about some good friend, he was told that the friend must not be a Kurd.

The Complexion Complex

It was our first day at the PAF Air War College. We were handed out a one page form each to fill in our personal data. In the 'complexion' entry, a darkish member wrote "Fair". Another member quietly changed it to "Fairly Black".

Navy versus Air Force

A darkish naval officer never failed to pass funny comments on the air force. A PAF friend responded, "In whites, you resemble a milk bottle with Pepsi lid".

Ab Bata Do - the Future of Pak India Relations

In the Current Affairs exercise at the War Course, a member Sohaib Afzal covered 'The Future of Pakistan-India Relations'. Nobody understood this future at the end of his presentation and he was tasked to repeat the exercise. A course member, Amjad approached Sohaib, and, instead of offering commiserations, said,

"Ab bata do the future of our relations with India."

(You can now tell us what the future of Pakistan-India relations is)

RIYADH

Dark Pilot in Brown Coverall

At Riyadh, a dark PAF pilot on deputation was issued the brown RSAF coverall. When he wore it, a colleague commented,

"anj lagda aye, jaivain kisse ne kattey te bori payee hoyee aye

(it appears as if someone has put a sack on a buffalo calf).

Double Standards

At Riyadh, a colleague, in a discussion on Nawaz Sharif said, "How can he be a good politician when he is so fond of 'payas'?"

After a few days, I happened to visit this colleague. His son informed me that he was not home. He had gone to a friend to feast on 'payas'.

Saudi Demand for a Lizard

A Saudi asked his Indian servant to fetch him a 'Monitor lizard' (urdu *goh*). The Indian looked for it all over the desert and didn't find it. He returned home empty handed and informed the Saudi about the outcome. The Saudi warned him,

"If you did not find the required object by fall of the evening, consider yourself fired."

Despite all efforts, the task remained unfinished. Fear of losing the job made the Indian weep to tears. Meanwhile, he spotted a small lizard on the wall. He got hold of the reptile and started beating it left and right repeating, "Fain baba, Fain mama, Fain baba, Fain mama..." (Where is your father, where is your mother...)

Status of Navigators – PAF/IAF

In the late 1980s, I worked in King Faisal Air Academy, Riyadh to train the RSAF crew members. At a graduation party in the Academy, I met Group Captain Ayaz Hussain Tiwana, the Pakistan Air Attaché along with his Indian counterpart, Group Captain Tiagi. Both officers represented the fighter elite in their respective air forces who occupy the top positions. Promotions of the *lesser officers* depend on them in both forces. I asked Tiagi at a point about the career prospects of IAF navigators. He told me that his air force had a navigator in the rank of Air Marshal and two more in the AVM rank. Knowing the Pakistani Attaché for his humour, I remarked, "That shows your fighter pilots are not insensitive to human aspirations." Tiagi promptly replied, "But I will ask your fighters not to repeat after our mistakes."

Bandar Saudi or Pakistani

During my classes at King Faisal Air Academy, Riyadh, the cadets named 'Bandar' were sometimes noted for their performance. If a cadet performed well on a particular day, he was told, "Today you are a Bandar Saudi." On the contrary, if his performance was below the required standard, the comment changed to, "*Alyaum Bandar Bakistani*".

Kingdom Tower of Riyadh

A student pilot at Riyadh Air Academy asked the class, "Why does the Kingdom Tower have a big hole at the top?" Not receiving the answer, he said, "This is to facilitate an aircraft in passing through the hole."

This particular conversation took place just after 9/11.

Indian Counting Floors of Faisaliya Tower

In Riyadh, an Indian was counting floors of the Faisaliya Tower. A Saudi youth approached him and demanded, "What are you doing?" The Indian replied that he was counting floors.

Saudi: "It is forbidden to count floors here. How many did you count?"

Indian: "Twenty."

Saudi: "Give me twenty riyals."

The Indian obliged and the youth left the scene. An old Saudi had been following the event. He approached the Indian and said, "Idiot, why did you pay the youth twenty riyals?"

Indian: "You might like to believe that I am devoid of intellect, but I am clever."

Saudi: "What makes you say that?"

Indian: "I actually counted thirty floors and confessed to having done only twenty."

Navigators versus Bombs

Tony Tyndale was a retired RAF Squadron Leader serving at KFAA as an instructor with me at Riyadh. During introductions, Tony told me that he was from 'Supply' branch. I asked him, "Are supply officers called 'Blanket Stackers' in the RAF?"

In response to my question, he asked my branch. I told him that I was in Navigation.

He followed up by another question, "Do you know the difference between a Navigator and a 500 pounder bomb?"

When I replied in negative, he said, "Not all 500 pounders are retarded."

The Children Response to Seeing Sikhs the First Time

During my deputation to Saudi Arabia, the family decided to visit London in 1989. One day we were in Southall area where I spotted some Sikhs. I explained to my children briefly about the Sikh religious practices including their dress code.

After a while, my 6 year old daughter Maimoona, was overheard softly counting something. She had reached the figure of 17. Curious, I asked her about the

commodity under count. She replied enthusiastically, “Abu, I have seen 17 Sikhs so far”. We had another Pakistani family on board and we all shared laughter.

My elder son Ali was 7 years old at that time. At a red signal ahead, Ali suddenly shouted, “Abu, Sikh!” pointing to the driver of a car parked on our left. The Sikh heard him and cast an angry stare at us.

Now everyone was rolling with laughter. The sixty five year old Pakistani lady in our car said in between her hysteric giggles,

“Rafiq, your children are viewing Sikhs as types of monkey never seen before.”

A Child in a Hurry to Get Rid of an Unpleasant Demand

My friend Firasat has a son by the name ‘Hamza’. At the age of 2 or so he sounded cute uttering “A, B, C, D.” Also, when picked up against his will, he would say, “*Tar do*” (Let go of me). I picked him and requested him to say “A, B, C, D.” He was not in the mood to respond and said, “*Tar do.*” When I persisted, he hurriedly said, “A, B, C, D, *Tar do.*”

Two Slaps for Different Reasons

I was returning from Makkah to Riyadh with my family in a bus. During the journey, my children were a bit playful. The Egyptian conductor felt averse to their behaviour and kept shouting at them throughout the journey. I barely managed to control myself. The next day, I narrated the incident to a British navigator George Hamilton. George remarked, “You should have given the conductor two slaps; one on account of his harassment of your children, and the other, for him being Egyptian.”

The Bengali Urdu

Bengalis working in the Gulf countries learn some Urdu and Hindi. This is necessitated by their dealings with Pakistani and Indian nationals. They have a typical accent where the letter “a” is normally replaced with “o”. Also placing right emphasis on wrong syllables is common. Another feature of the Bengali accent is that “s” and “sh” are interchangeable. These elements generate communication gaps which lead to funny situations at times. Here are some examples:

Gora Gori: A Bengali said to a Pakistani friend on Jeddah Beach, “*Gora Gori ja raha hae*” (A white man is walking with a white woman). Actually he meant “*Ghorra Gaari*” (horse and the cart).

Suriya ka Basha: Bengali ‘*siriya ka basha*’ (King of Syria) meant ‘*chirya ka bacha*’ (a tiny sparrow).

Boldia: (Already told you), ‘*for baladia*’ (city council). This was in response to a question from a Pakistani taxi driver to the Bengali passenger, “Where do you want to go?”

Bara Murghi: (twelve chickens) meant actually one ‘*bara*’ (large) chicken.

Mauka Gaya: (opportunity wasted)

This was my personal experience with a Bengali limousine driver.

I asked him about his activities. He said, “*Mauka gaya*”. I reassured him that if he had lost one opportunity, he would sure have another one. It dawned on me after listening to his explanations that he had visited Makkah for the holy journey.

Tum Salamat Raho. A Bengali was told by a Pakistani that on seeing the younger lot, you pray for their safety in expressions like **tum salamat raho**. The Bengali learnt it well and said to a Pakistani boy accompanied by his father, **tum shala mat raho**. This implies wishing the end of life to a person you dislike.

Long Queue Handling at Airline Counters

Once I was to travel from Riyadh to Islamabad. A friend came to see me off. At departures, there were long queues and all counters had “All Flights” displayed. There was a chance for me to miss the flight.

My accompanying friend understood the problem and without my knowledge asked a Bengali row collectively, “Bundu, where are you travelling to?” They all said, “Dhaka”. My friend said, “Not this queue, but the last queue on the left is for Dhaka passengers.” The passengers ran to the pointed line and we were the first ones on the counter recently vacated.

Praying during Hajj

During hadj, we were at Mina. A senior colleague named MJ said to me, “*Rafique! Ibadat karya kar*” (you must pray).

I said, “Sir *Tussi karya karo, tussi gunahgar o*” (Sir, you must pray more because you are a sinner). That day on, some friends call MJ as ‘gunahgar’.

The Hierarchy in the Saudi Royalty

During an examination at King Faisal Air Academy, Riyadh, I noticed a cadet with the surname ‘Aal Sheikh.’

I asked my Saudi co-invigilator if the latter fell in the prince category. Laughing, he replied, “*Aiwa, lakin, Sri Lanki*” (Yes, but of Sri Lankan status).

Skills Necessary to Earn a Surname

On my question to an Otaibi from central Nejd about his roots, he responded, “If you can steal a camel successfully, you are entitled to use ‘Otaibi’ as a surname”.

JEDDAH

Job Selection

A friend visited me at Jeddah. He said, “I am doing four things at the moment. I am simultaneously a pilot, a property dealer, a lawyer and a politician having contested for and lost in the MNA seat twice.” He wanted my advice on his future course of action. I responded, “Leave any three of your present assignments and you should be fine.”

Adopted Son

Saleem Anwar, an ex-PIA pilot adopted a relatively younger pilot Naveed. In a few days he adopted another new arrival Kamran Mateen who was a bit dark. When

Naveed protested on the new adaption, Saleem reassured him, “you still constituted the primary adoption and that Kamran is your carbon copy.”

The Hindi Neighbours

I had Indian neighbours almost ten years younger to me. Nidhin Menon and Mala Menon talked to me in Hindi sometimes half of which I did not understand. To take revenge I learnt some phrases from my Indian colleagues. In the next meeting, I asked the neighbours if they were santusht, persunn, praful, kushal mangal and kushal poorvak. All these expressions represent inner peace or visible happiness.

The neighbours confessed to me that they were not familiar with these words. Later I was to learn that they hailed from a southern state, Kerala where a Dravidian language Malyalam is the mode of communication. To Malyalis Urdu and Hindi are no different from each other. They had put in some effort to learn some words of the northern sub-continent where the languages are Indo-European. They had done all this to see me happy by speaking to me in my mother-tongue.

Airlines Performance versus Name

PIA – **P**lease **I**nform the **A**ngels

AI – **A**lready **I**nformed

LUFTHANSA – **L**et **U**s **F**orget the **H**ospitality **a**s **N**o **S**tewards are **A**vailable

A Sardar Pilot Proceeding to ‘Nal’

This was narrated to me by Wing Commander (Retired) Shahid Malik, an ex-IAF transport pilot who served with me in Saudi Arabian Airlines.

An IAF officer approached a sardar captain of a flight and said, “Sardar ji, sanoo vi lay chalo nal” (Take me along as well). Sardar ji said, “Oh, tussi vi ajao nal” (Okay, you may also come along).

The captain had the friend included in the passenger manifest and the aircraft took off from Chandigarh. It landed at Ahmadabad in Gujrat. All the passengers came out and the aircraft was switched off. This particular passenger was upset to learn that Ahmadabad was the final destination of this particular flight. On questioning about the reason, he said, “My intended destination had been Nal airfield”.

Bengalis and Energy

This is the other incident narrated by Shahid:

An IAF pilot of Haryana origin was posted to the IAF survival school as an instructor alongwith Shahid. He noticed that while most officers could complete the assigned physical exercise with ease, the Bengalis tired out very soon. Bengalis have surnames like Chatterjee and Bannerjee.

*The Haryanvi Jat was angry. He had the Bengalis assembled and exclaimed in anguish, "You Bengalis are Chatterjee, Bannerjee and Mukerjee, but no **energee**."*

A Useful Name

One of my Indian neighbours at Jeddah was named Mukarram. The Hindus heard his name as Mukka (punch) Ram. So he was relatively safe travelling through India.

Be Careful about Hungarians

At PSAA one day, I asked a slim looking pilot about the country of his origin. He said, "Hungary." I commented, "Is that the reason for your being so fit?" He said, "Actually, I don't like this joke." He is the only one to have taken offence to a remark. All others, including Indians enjoyed humour in the class.

The 'Kaslan' Sudanese

Sudanese are considered '*Kaslan*' (lazy) by the Saudis. On this subject, some well-known stories may serve as examples:

A Sudanese changing a Bulb: A Sudanese was standing on a chair supported by a friend to reach an unserviceable bulb in the ceiling which he intended to replace with a serviceable one. He was asked by his friend to rotate his hand for fitting the bulb in the socket. The Sudanese being lazy asked the friend to rotate the chair instead.

The Sudanese Dress: The Sudanese dress has pockets on both sides of the dress. This is to evade the hard work involved in checking as to which side should be on the front.

Comments on Names

As an instructor, I normally started the class by 'Introduction', which forms essential part of the **entry behaviour**. Here are some examples.

"I am Muhammad Rafiq from Pakistan. What is your good name?"

Captain: "I am **Bill Host** from Manchester."

Me: "Come on Captain, hosts never talk of bills."

Me: "Captain, your good name, please."

Captain: "I am Chris **Broad** from Perth, Australia."

Me: "Captain, I asked your name, not dimensions."

Me: "Captain, your good name please!"

Captain: "I am Richard **Glass** from South Africa."

Me: "Half empty or half full?"

Me: "Captain, may I ask your name please?"

Captain: "Oh sure. I am Bob **Coffee** from Scotland."

Me: "With milk, I believe (He is white)."

Me: "Captain, your good name please."

Captain: "Robin **Banks**."

Me: "I know Robin Hood broke banks to collect money for the poor."

Me: "Captain, would you please introduce yourself to the class?"

Captain: "Yes please. I am Neil **Herman** from England."

Me: "Stop listening to her and be your own man sometimes (her man)."

Me: "Captain, your name please."

Captain: "Yes please. I am Mike **Donavan** from Wales, UK."

Me: "But punctuality is important (pretending to hear 'don't know when')."

Me: "Captain, please tell us about your good self."

Captain: "Sure. I am Ron **Denver** from New York City."

Me: "But accurate navigation is important here (hearing 'don't know where')."

Me: "Captain, your good name please."

Captain: "Yes please. I am Andrew **Mango** from Perth, Australia."

Me: "Overripe, I believe (He was 64)."

Possible Comments on other Names

Some more comments on names are possible:

Rick Halfman: Six feet tall and still a half man?

David Lunch: Yeah, the food contents are re-named **dinner** after sunset.

Andrew Baker: Do not sell your products in the class.

John Axelrod: Please control your movements in the class.

Paul Hancock: Both genders are represented in the surname (hen & cock).

Grant Vinning: Nothing is granted. You must win the grades here.

Alan Lamb: Survive the wolves before setting other priorities.

Jonathan Black: The makeup seems to have come off (He is white).

Derek Watmor: The whole lesson. We have not started yet.

Brian Trotter: Do not jump to gallop before canter (Horse speeds).

Kim Samsung: You, not the refrigerator (He is a Korean).

Abbot Bell: The volume must remain below 75 decibels.

Able Beeks: Look left and right before turning the head.

Abram Arms: With license hopefully.

Adam Atwill: Not when there are procedures in place.

Aden Laws: Only the aviation part of them.

Adolph Axe: You will not need to grind in this docile class.

Alan Arrow: Point it at the board. You are losing concentration.

Aldridge Atwater: After you have perfected the land operations.

Alfred Avery: Details do help in preparing short lists.

Alex Balderson: But you are richer than your hairy brothers.

Abel Bangs: Over speeding is the most probable cause.

Duleep Katkar: Sara kha giya ya thora chhor diya?(ate all or left some?). *He is a Maratha from Mumbai.*

Barry Cotton: Check the weather forecast before leaving the class.

Adney Barker: But no biting.

Alan Barks: Be mindful of the thin walls separating classrooms.

David Goode: Results will tell.

John Graves: No bad omens. Safety standards are not bad here.

George Hightower: We do not fly too low here.

Edward Lane: Now airway. You are in aviation industry.

Barry Mutton: How long did it take you to reach the Academy from the slaughter house?

Rick Outlaw: Do not try your luck here.

Eric Pound: I know you did not change to euro (he is British).

Paul Wardrobe: The airline uniform must be accorded priority over fancy dresses.

Gregory Wash: Do not worry. Laundry is included in the hotel package.

Pete Saylor: Good, your experience will be handy in ditching operations.

Akiko Fujimoto: Required to undergo a kamikaze de-indoctrination before starting the Procedures (he is Japanese).

Kasumi Honda: Road traffic is different from airway flying (he is Japanese).

NOSTALGIA

The Folk Performances

Mirza Saheban, Heer Sial, Sohni Maheenwal, Shireen Farhad and Sassi Punnu stories were acted out by performers.

A comedian was an integral part of every story. Some stories spanned two full nights. They were captivating and made people cry and laugh at will of the artists. **Vail**, the money given by the audience to performers was in competition between groups of audience at times.

Starting with the School

The elementary book or Qaida was the first book taught at school. The hardest part is to learn the Urdu substitutes of the Punjabi expressions. Some examples are:

Alif-Anar (Good start but that is almost all).

Bey-Baandar

Tey-phatti

Sey-phal fruit

Jeem-jutti

Meem-kukri

The Childhood Jugni on Multan

Nothing was more entertaining for all and sundry in those days than a fanfare. The following lines on Multan in Jugni style were commonly heard:

Jugni ja warri Multan

Othay barray barray pehlwaan

Khanday giriyaan te badaam

Maaran mukki te kaddan jan

(Jugni entered Multan. She found big wrestlers there. Almonds constituted their favourite food. Their blow was powerful enough to claim life of the victim)

Some more Memories of the Childhood Jugni

Radio came up in 1960s in the villages; TV and VCR in 1970s and 1980s. Computers, mobiles and internet together overtook almost all fields of life from 1990s to the present era. Here is an excerpt from the Jugni sung by performers at a village (Chak No. 519) in 1960s.

Jugni ja warri punj so unni

Muslamanan ne ragar ragar k darhi munni

Gith ku nari munh wich tunni

Tambakoo bajh na rehndi unni

(Jugni entered Chak 519. Muslims shaved their beards to the very root. They shoved a long Hubble bubble pipe in their mouths. 519 cannot do without tobacco.)

In those days, shaving the beard totally was frowned upon by the society. Smoking Hubble bubble was also considered anti-social.

A Folklore Parody of a Noor Jehan Song

Original Song:

Mahi ve saanoon bhul na javeen

Allah da naa een der na laveen

Haan dia sajnaan

Lammian judaiaan din pyar de

(Do not forget me lover. For God's sake do not delay your arrival. You, the friend of my age group, why long separation in these days of love?)

The Parody Part:

Replace the last line with

'patliyaan razaiyaan din sial de'

(Thin quilts in winter nights are poor protection against the biting cold).

The Folk Wisdom – Sass Ton Chori

When someone allures you into an action which is of benefit to him at your cost, undoubtedly he believes that you are devoid of any intellect.

For instance, the man will ask you to share the crop of potatoes with him under the arrangement that whatever is below the earth is his and all the remaining part is for you. He assumes that you are ignorant of the fact that potatoes grow under the earth surface. The leaves are above the earth but they are of no use.

For such situations, I heard a Punjabi saying:

Sass ton mein chori ayi aan

Meinu jauvan ton kanak wata de

(I have come without the knowledge of my mother-in-law. Take barley from me and return me an equal amount of wheat).

The person offering this deal believes that you are unaware of the fact that wheat is more costly than barley.

Ladies were no less in Humour

The female performances of all age groups in the marriage-related festivity including dholki and mehndi bore testimony to the teamwork which reflected simplicity, sincerity, mutual trust and the gender exclusivity.

The two genders normally did not mix but during marriages limited contact was permitted. Boys of five or less were an exception anyway and could watch these performances. The same lines were repeated over and over but it is the change of performers that made the occasions so memorable.

Some legendary lines are narrated below.

Pranda the Evergreen Female Dress part

Kali teri gut te pranda tera laal nee

Roop diye raniye parande noon sanbhal nee.

(Your black hair with red tail gives you the appearance of a beauty queen. It is time that you guarded your beauty.)

Duet of the Time

An equally popular song of those days was a duet with alternate female and male lines:

Jutt kurian to dar da maara, mohdey uttay daang rakh da

(The farmer is afraid of a female offensive. For self-defence he keeps a club on his shoulder.)

Othay daang nan kisey di chaldi, tey jithay challey teer akh da

(No clubs can provide a protective shield against arrows launched from beautiful eyes.)

Ainvain musch noon maroray daivain, te kehra tera saag toriya

(You are displaying your male chauvinism as if to admonish me against any venture into your guarded crop of vegetables.)

Saara khet hawaley teray, te assan tenu kadon morria

(How can I dare do such a thing? The entire crop is at your disposal.)

Mein pandran murabbian wali, kachehry wich miley kursi

(I am the potential inheritor to a huge chunk of agricultural land. My name is listed among the formally recognised local chiefs.)

Saanoo bin tankhahon kurriye, murabbian tey rakh munshi

(My love for you is devoid of worldly expectations. I volunteer to keep your accounts without a penny worth of benefits).

Tainu chan di mein sair karawan, roos dey raakit te

(I dream of our tourism to the moon with a Russian rocket as the mode of travel.)

Othay jaa kay mein charkhi dhawan, jithay teray hal wagdey

(My ultimate dream is to weave cotton next to your farms and have you in sight while your ploughs are in action.)

The funny part was that ladies of all ages were compelled to perform and some ladies came up with real surprises. Loud giggles in unison were overheard when some apparently shy ladies performed better than expected.

Female Monkey

One of the funniest parodies was the one where a girl acted as the monkey charmer. She held another female impersonating as a female monkey clad in the required outfit. With a rope tied to the monkey neck, the end was held by the charmer.

The female monkey walked on all fours and performed to the line below:

Baareen barseen khattan giya te khat ke liandi chandi

(After twelve long years of idleness, when he finally ventured out to generate some income, he was lucky to return with some precious metals in pocket).

Saadey naalon baandri changi, jehrey nit muklavay jaandi

(Even the female monkey is luckier than the spinsters awaiting marriage proposals).

Bicycle, a Luxury

Nowadays a motorcycle constitutes an integral part of every household. 50 years back, a bicycle was accorded the same status as the motorcycle of today. Every

family dreamed of buying a Raleigh company bicycle. Gradually the Chinese bicycle replaced Raleigh. Raleigh was anyway unaffordable by a vast majority.

Almost everyone had the necessary skill to repair a punctured tube. For the old members of the village, bicycle riding was an adventure. They could not even apply brakes. As the bus approached from behind, the trembling hands would turn the handle towards the bus. The youth made fun of the elders on this account and were chased away angrily by the older lot.

An air pump was always carried by elders even for a journey of one kilometre.

The All-in-All Barber

A barber would always manage to give you the cut of his choice. Regardless of your protests he would succeed at least partially in implementing his will.

The barber was also the village surgeon as much as the match maker. As the event manager in marriages, he had his way to insure punctuality. A slow response to wake up calls led to overturning of cots along with the occupants. An equally effective tactic was to use non-poisonous insects whose sharp bites created effect.

Throughout the marriage ceremony the barber would not mind even disciplining father of the bridegroom. As he was well-meaning, no one took offence. If there were more than one joker groups, he would allot equal time to each party. Anyone overshooting the time limit would face a rough physical handling by him.

His wife exercised similar control over ladies. She remembered the bridal dresses by heart and, to keep the surprise, she would not show them even to the dearest relations of the groom.

With responsibilities scientifically shared, no member felt fatigued, and the system, as a whole, worked to perfection.

Banda keh Naee

To deliver bad news to relatives normally a man unknown to them was sent. Good news was sent through the barber. On seeing the visitor the hosts could expect a good or a bad news. After making the guest comfortable their apprehension did not subside till they had confirmed with the visitor, "Toon banda ain ke naee ain".

Retired Soldiers

In most families the retired soldiers came back to the village at the age of 35. They had nothing to do except to demand respect as pensioners in the family. They picked up legal quarrels as a pastime.

Everyone had a Favourite Dress

Some shirts were worn on special occasions only. The close circle of friends knew your mood by the shirt you wore. A muffler was an expensive part of the dress. You had to borrow it from friends at times. Favourite clothes were never parted with. They were mutually repaired by friends. Caps too were important.

Shahbala on Marriages

Shahbala was paid a small amount along with the doolha. He was a rich guy for a coming few weeks.

Dhol Player was a Favourite of the Kids

The dhol players congratulating a child birth would easily accommodate small children on their dhol.

A Son-in-law of the Village was Entitled for Invitation by any Family

A son-in-law of any household was to be respected by all and sundry. When he wanted to take a bath, normally two men of his age group would assist him in hand pump operation and would cater to his needs like soap and oil.

Accompanying Uncles or Elder Brothers

If you accompanied an uncle, an elder brother, a cousin or even a neighbour to his in-laws, you would enjoy the best of food including sweet dish. You could also expect to get some pocket money from the hosts.

New Quilts and Pillows

The ladies were particularly unfair in this field. They would serve their own relatives with new and heavier quilts.

The guests belonging to your paternal bloodline had to contend with lesser ghee, lesser sugar and older and thinner quilts.

Departing Guests

At departure the guest would give the children a rupee each. Your parents would ask you to return the money. You would do but reluctantly. Ultimately you would mostly pocket the money.

Adventures

Sometimes highly risky operations were experimented without knowledge of the parents. These included adventures with high ground, valleys, ponds, cows, bulls and insects. Night travel was remembered for the risky terrain, possibility of being chased by dogs and the danger of being looted by robbers. A strategy was discussed and implemented during such journeys.

Tug-of- War

Tug-of-war was a game played not only by the youngsters but also the old members of the village. The neighbouring villages were challenged and total surprises in performance were not uncommon. In an extreme case a boy was fed for a number of years and kept hidden from the neighbouring villages. In the annual regional sports, he came out as a surprise for the entire region and he won his village the best prize.

Fanfares Remembered for Performers and Eatables

You would receive some extra money for an annual local fanfare. A food item purchased and shared with friends was returned sometimes the next year.

Mutual Fights were not Reported to Parents to avoid Admonition

Shirts were repaired mutually and injuries catered to in a hurry to preclude admonition from parents.

Eating away each other's Meals

By mischief the boys would eat each other's snacks insuring that the mothers never learnt about them. Scorching heat was countered by consumption of diluted lassi.

Bravery was Admired

Performance rather than speeches were remembered.

Trees were Known by Stories Behind them

The old trees had stories behind them. Some trees were considered the abode of genies. Some others were known to be 100 years of age. Some trees were dangerous for physical presence of snakes and other poisonous reptiles.

Good Students were Good Teachers

Some students were so good teachers that even the teachers sought their help to make the class understand.

Sense of Propriety and Belonging

Own village was the best village and own mohallah the best mohallah.

Chorus Songs and Parodies were Good Recreation

Some boys could never sing but were excellent supporters in a chorus song.

Any Elder could Discipline any Child unlike Nowadays

If an elder disciplined a child his parents won't take ill of it.

Mutual Trust was Rule rather than Exception

Anyone not found trustworthy was not respected. Of necessity therefore, everyone tried to keep the trust reposed in him.

Sports

Lattoo was a demanding skill.

Kabaddi and wrestling were common to all.

Bara geeti was the cheapest sport.

Volleyball and football matches were a matter of life and death.

Long jump and high jump were stretched to the maximum performance.

Food was Never Wasted

Particularly the local ketchup was taken care of till the last drop.

Cards

Cards were common to all ages. The players forgot even to eat when deeply engaged in cards play.

Jeeps

Jeeps were sought after for rides and hunting. Improvised cooking was the best part of hunting.

Marriages were Looked Forward to Particularly by the Ladies

Marriages were planned months in advance and food and festivity enjoyed to the fullest by all and sundry. To preclude food contamination, marriages were normally not conducted in summers. Ladies circle was a taboo for male members of all ages under normal circumstances, but in marriages some controlled mixing of the two genders was permitted. Although every one enjoyed the marriage ceremonies, ladies enjoyed them much more. They enjoyed their visits to city due to the chance to feast on food sold by vendors. But the major reason of their excitement was the shopping for the marriage ceremonies.

Nick Names were Accepted as Normal

Nicknames could be used without any apprehension of causing offence. If a boy known to be religious sang or danced, he would earn the nickname disco maulvi or the equivalent.

Teeli, dhol, lamboo, githa were for friends. Bandoq wala baba, dandey wala chacha were used for elders.

Fodder Chopping

The fodder was chopped by hand-operated machines. Youngsters went around the village in looking for offering assistance particularly to the ladies. They enjoyed competitions in operation of the machines.

Stones used as Tool Sharpeners

Some youngsters were masters of the art.

Jokers at Marriages

Jokers at marriages were a must. Some boys entered into competition with them.

Celebrating Days

Apart from the internationally recognised days, we have started to celebrate Mothers-in-Law and Fathers-in-law days at our places once a year. The mothers-in-law on their day, for instance, are invited over a cup of tea. Our grandchildren are ready to receive them. Once settled in their chairs on arrival, they are presented cards and gifts by the kids.

The contents of the cards are read out by the kids, one such card contained:

" Mrs Nabeel, you are a wonderful mother-in-law. Thank you for looking after Mr Muhammad Ali so well." It was satisfying for us to see the mothers-in-law so happy.

Everyone who learnt about this practice liked the idea. Many colleagues indicated the intention to put this idea into practice.

We feel that the mothers-in-law of our children deserve more smiles from the flight line than all other contenders.

EPILOGUE

The hard hit targets in the text are our trusted friends with big hearts. Our way of paying tribute to them is to pull their leg a bit. Maratib is the most respectable friend who has tolerance to limits. So is Tamton. Shehzada Shahid Pervez Fazil, for instance, read this script and called from Canada. He insists that his complexion now is fairer than before.

Similarly, all ethnic groups in Pakistan feel secure enough to laugh at themselves.

This part was kept till end so that you could first enjoy the humour.

By the way, what is the progress on your humour book?

END OF THE BOOK